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**FAME**

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AND

# FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

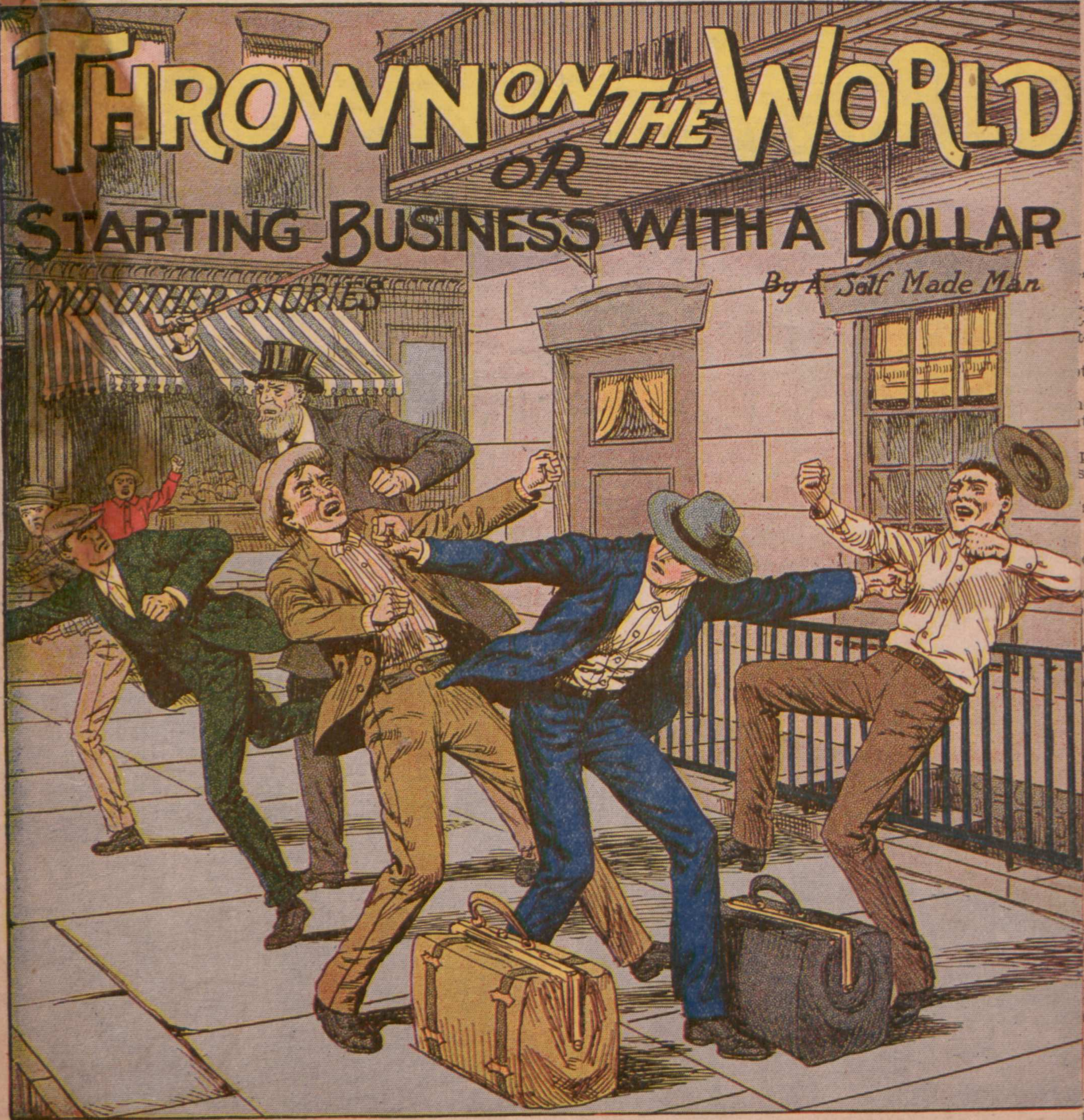
## THROWN ON THE WORLD

OR

### STARTING BUSINESS WITH A DOLLAR

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self Made Man



The two young rascals swooped down on Fred, each intent upon wresting one of the valises from him. But they didn't know the boy they were dealing with. Fred dropped the bags and, quick as lightning, struck out with both fists.







# Fame and Fortune Weekly

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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# THROWN ON THE WORLD

—OR—

## STARTING BUSINESS WITH A DOLLAR

By A SELF-MADE MAN

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE FIRE.

"Where have you been all the evening, you young whelp?" roared Henry, better known as Hank, Davis, a stalwart, red-faced man, as his step-son, Fred Fisher, came into the poorly-furnished living-room where the speaker, and two boon companions of his own stripe, were playing cards at the deal table.

"I've been over calling on my friend, Dick Harvey," replied the boy, in a low tone, as he hung his hat on a nail.

"Oh, you have, eh? Well, you haven't any right to be out of the way when I want you. Here, take this can, go to the tavern and get it filled with beer. And see that he doesn't give you all froth, mind that. Be lively about it, or I'll take the strap to you."

"I wish you wouldn't send me to that place. I don't like to be seen there."

"What's that? You don't like to be seen at the tavern? Confound your impudence! How dare you talk to me that way? Where's that strap?" and Davis shoved back his chair and looked around for the article which Fred, from experience, regarded as an instrument of torture.

"Here's the can, young feller," said one of the visitors, Joe Ready by name. "Better scoot quick or you'll catch it."

Fred caught the can as it was tossed to him, and grabbing his hat, left the miserable cottage where he and his step-father lived after a fashion.

It was a blustering spring night.

The wind tore across the landscape in a boisterous way, raising eddies of dust here and there along the road.

The cottage stood on the suburbs of the village of Fairview, and was fully exposed to the wild pranks of the blast, which whistled around and under its eaves, rattled the windows, many of which were broken and repaired with pieces of tin nicely adjusted to keep out the weather, and shook the whole building from ground floor to topmost rafter.

A crescent moon peeped out occasionally through the ragged breaks in the heavy dark clouds rushing at race-horse speed across the firmament, and a pale looking star or two could also be seen once in a while.

There was a feeling of rain in the air, but none had fallen up to that time.

It was a night when most people prefer to remain indoors and sit near the glow of an open fire or the heat from a stove.

The hour was eleven o'clock, and most of the lights along the main street had been extinguished or turned very low down.

The tavern Fred was bound for was about a quarter of a mile away, and was the last house at that end of the street proper.

From that point the street merged into the country road, on which road the cottage in question stood.

As the road continued on from the other end of the street, the business thoroughfare of Fairview was simply a connecting link, lined with stores, a small hotel, a town hall, the post-office, the newspaper office, and a double line of big trees.

Although the tavern did a roaring trade evenings, it was not regarded with favor by the greater portion of the villagers.

For that reason Fred Fisher hated to go there, for he enjoyed a very fair reputation in the village, and did not want to spoil it.

Everybody knew what a hard proposition the boy was up against in the person of his step-father, who was a lazy, disreputable man, who worked only when he had to.

Hank Davis was a carpenter, and when he married Fred's mother he was a sober and industrious man.

But misfortune overtook him, and that soured his nature.

First he lost money on a building contract he entered into with the banker and most important man in the village.

This led to a row between them, and Davis went around declaring that the rich man had taken undue advantage of him.

That made the banker his enemy, and the gentleman used his influence to prevent Davis from getting work from people who had been accustomed to send for him when they wanted anything done.

Of course, that didn't improve matters, and only made Davis hotter under the collar.

About that time a demagogue came to the village and began holding forth evenings at the tavern on the rights of the working man and the unfair advantages exercised by the rich.

His most enthusiastic convert was Hank Davis.

He and his demagogue had many private talks together, and it was noticeable that he paid for all the drinks, while the newcomer did most of the talking.

When the demagogue went on his way he left an excellent disciple behind him in Davis, who worked less after that with his hands, but more with his mouth.

He found enough in the papers about trusts and combinations of capital to supply him with all the ammunition he wanted to fling at the rich.

Wherever he went to do a job of work he aired his fund of arguments against those who possessed more than he had, and as a result people got tired of hearing him talk, and he lost trade.

Things went from bad to worse with him, and to crown his bad luck his wife died.

After that he practically quit working altogether.

He spent the greater part of his time at the tavern, and the cottage went to the bow-wows, though Fred did what he could to keep it tidy.



The frequenters of the tavern got tired of his orations, and the proprietor told him to cut them out or stay away.

That made him grouchy for the time being, and he got his two cronies to come to his cottage and play cards with him there.

Thus we find them on the night our story opens.

Fred was half-way to the tavern when he remembered that he had not received the money to pay for the beer.

As he had heard his step-father say that the tavern-keeper had refused him any more credit, there was nothing for him to do but turn around and go back.

Walking along the road that night was anything but a pleasant recreation, for the wind had a way of running up his sleeves and trowsers legs, and down the back of his neck, at the same time showing a playful desire to whisk off his hat.

To make matters worse it began to rain soon after he turned back, so that he was quite wet by the time he reached the cottage.

"Slap the can on the table," growled his step-father when he walked in.

"I haven't got the beer," said Fred.

"The dickens you haven't!" roared Davis, glaring at him.

"Why haven't you got it?"

"You didn't give me the money to pay for it."

"There it is, you thick-headed monkey," said Hank, flinging a quarter at him. "Now run all the way there and back, and make up the time you've lost."

At that moment the rain began coming down in a steady pour, the wind dashing it against the windows overlooking the road.

Fred went to the window and looked out.

His face was reflected back by the ebony background, and he could see nothing but the pattering raindrops when they hit the glass and ran down in rivulets.

"What are you standing there for?" cried Hank Davis, angrily. "Why don't you start yourself?"

"I can't go out in that pouring rain," replied the boy.

"Why can't you? You're not sugar or salt, and won't melt."

"I'll go when it lets up."

"You'll go when I tell you to, do you understand?"

Fred made no answer.

His silence angered his step-father.

The man sprang up with an oath and rushed at him.

Fred, aware of the strength and ungovernable temper of his step-father, darted to the other side of the room to get out of his way.

"Think you'll escape me, do you?" cried Davis, spying the strap and pausing long enough to pick it up.

Fred might easily have got out of the room, but he hated to beat an inglorious retreat, so he made up his mind to keep the table between him and the angry man as long as Ready and Hengler, who were laughing and enjoying the ruction, as they called it, did not interfere.

With the strap in his hand Davis made another dash at his step-son.

Fred, who was as spry as a young monkey, ran around to the opposite side of the table and stopped to get a line on his step-father's next move.

"Stay where you are, you young villain!" cried Davis, rushing around the table to seize the boy.

Fred didn't stay to be seized, but skipped to the other side just vacated by his pursuer.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Ready and Hengler. "Why don't you catch him, Davis?"

With a howl of rage Davis started again.

This time he didn't stop, neither did Fred.

Round and round the table they both went three times, and then Davis stopped to catch his breath and hurl imprecations at the boy.

"I'll skin you alive for this, you young varmint!" he shouted, furiously.

Fred said nothing, for he knew it would be useless to waste his breath on his step-father.

The howl of the wind and the beating of the rain rose above the tumult in the room.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the two visitors again. "This is as good as a circus."

"Why don't you catch him for me?" sported Davis.

"It's none of our business," answered Ready, who preferred to see the fun go on, and the same sentiment animated Hengler.

Davis made a sudden swing with the strap and leaned across the table, thinking to hit the boy a heavy blow.

Instead of which the end of the strap missed Fred by a foot and caught Ready a stinging whack on the neck and face.

With a cry of pain and a choice invective, the visitor sprang up and, rushing around the table, struck Davis a blow in the jaw.

In a moment the pair were slugging each other as hard as they could.

Then they grappled and struggled back and forth.

Davis was the stronger of the two, and he flung Ready with a crash against the table.

Over it went, carrying the lamp with it.

The glass chimney fell to pieces with a crash, and the room darkened for a few moments, while the men fought in the wreck of the table.

Then the oil, running out, ignited from the wick and ran blazing across the floor to a box full of shavings, which caught fire and blazed up.

With a cry of consternation Fred rushed to put the fire out, but he encountered Hengler in the semi-gloom and confusion, and both went down on the floor.

The blaze caught the long chintz curtains of the window, and they blazed up to the ceiling.

Fred, in great alarm, recovered his feet and called on Hengler to help him put the fire out.

Hengler, in response, kicked the box of shavings away from the wall.

This only scattered the blazing material all around that side of the room.

The curtains of the other window caught and blazed up.

Fred reached for the pail which usually held water, but it happened to be empty, and he ran outside in the rain to fill it at the well.

When he got back the whole side of the room was on fire.

He flung the water on the flames and ran out for more.

But the fire made greater progress than his efforts to put it out, and the smoke was filling the room fast.

Hengler had given up further endeavors to wrestle with the fire, and did his best to separate the two fighters.

In this he succeeded, and the sight of the flames put a stop to the scrap.

By this time the cottage, which was old and as dry inside as tinder, was doomed, though it could easily have been saved had the village fire-engine been on the scene.

Fred and the three men could not put a stop to the conflagration, which ate its way into the story above, and that made the case hopeless.

In a short time the fire found its way through the roof, and though the rain was against it, the wind helped it spread at a rapid rate, and soon the road and immediate neighborhood was lighted up by the blaze.

## CHAPTER II.

### AFTER THE FIRE.

The village fire department was a small, volunteer one, and the engine was an ancient hand affair which hadn't been called into action in a year.

Two old men, whose days of usefulness were over, had been taken from the county poorhouse, given lodgings in the engine-house, and paid a sum sufficient to keep them in food and smoking tobacco to stand watch, one by day and the other by night, in a small compartment, with four windows, directly under the belfry.

If they saw a suspicious smoke by day or flames by night anywhere within their scope of vision, it was their duty to ring the alarm bell.

This called out the members of the department, who rushed at once to the engine-house, ran out the machine and the hose carriage, and pulled them to the fire.

In the daytime half the villagers left their stores and shops to help the good work along, but at night the number was much less.

Owing to the long time that the village and vicinity had been without a fire, the old men had grown lax in their vigilance.

On this occasion the night watchman was sleeping at his post, and did not see the blaze at the cottage.

Two men on their way home from the tavern saw it, however, and not hearing the alarm bell, rushed to the engine-house and pounded on the door.

The noise awoke the day watcher, who was sleeping in his bunk, and when he learned the cause of the rumpus, he hurried up to the tower as fast as his old legs would take him, and found his associate asleep.



"Wake up, wake up, Johnson, there's a fire!" he cried.

Then he grabbed the bell rope and rang the alarm.

The rain had let up and the volunteers, looking out of their windows, saw the blaze, and hastened to the engine-house.

In a short time the hand-engine and hose-cart were on their way to the scene of the fire.

When they arrived the cottage was beyond saving.

The engine, however, was run into the yard and the short hose put down the well, then the crowd got hold of the working bars and began to pump at a great rate.

The stream was turned on the flames, and the kitchen extension and part of the walls of the first story saved from destruction, but to all intents and purposes the cottage was destroyed.

The village constable with two assistants were on hand to help and maintain order.

When the fire was almost out, Hank Davis went up to the constable and ordered him to arrest his step-son as the cause of the blaze.

As Fred Fisher bore a much better reputation than his step-father, the officer was in no hurry to take the boy into custody.

A crowd gathered around the constable, the boy and Davis, and listened to the opposing stories told by Fred and his step-father.

Fred said that Joe Ready and Tom Hengler were present and would verify his statement.

Those individuals had disappeared shortly before Davis made his charge.

Davis denounced Fred roundly, and insisted that he be arrested.

The constable compromised the matter by saying he would take Fred to his house, keep him there overnight, and bring him before the justice in the morning, when the affair could be thrashed out.

"Remember, Davis, that the boy's word is as good as yours. You will have to produce a witness to bear you out, or it will be useless for you to proceed against your step-son," said the constable.

"I'll have two of them," replied Hank.

"The only two you can get are Ready and Hengler," said Fred, "and if they tell the truth I am not afraid of being held for this fire."

Constable Smith put Fred on his word of honor not to run away, and then left him to wait around until he was ready to start back for the village.

The crowd put little stock in Davis' charge against Fred, for the boy was favorably known in the village, and as the fire was almost out, the spectators left the scene in bunches.

The volunteer firemen remained till the last spark was extinguished, and then hauled the engine and hose-cart back to the house.

With them went the constable and Fred.

Smith took the boy to his house and gave him the spare bedroom to pass the night in.

In the morning Fred had his breakfast with the constable and his family.

At ten o'clock they walked to the office of the justice.

A crowd was there curious to hear the real facts of the case.

Hank Davis, mad over the destruction of his cottage, was on hand to press the charge against his step-son.

He was not regarded with a friendly eye, but he didn't seem to care.

With him were Joe Ready and Tom Hengler.

Davis told his story and called on his pals to verify it.

This they tried to do, but made a bungle of it under the questioning of the justice.

Then Fred told his story in a straightforward way.

As the whole trouble evidently arose from the boy's disinclination to go to the tavern for beer, popular sentiment ran wholly in his favor.

The justice summed the charge up as groundless, and discharged Fred.

"Ain't I going to get any justice?" demanded Davis.

"Justice in this case sides with your step-son, and I don't see the slightest reason for holding him responsible for the fire which destroyed your cottage. You upset the lamp yourself while fighting with Ready, and that was the cause of the fire. According to the boy's story, which I believe, he did the best he could to save the house. The feeling you have shown toward him is not to be commended. From all I've heard about the relations existing between you since his mother died, I should say he has done more for you than you have done for him," said the justice.

"That's always the way, when a man is down he's kicked

further into a hole," snarled Davis. "A poor man has no chance in this world. I know I haven't had any show since Banker Brown began persecuting me. The rich hate to see the poor get their noses off the grindstone. They think they own the earth, but the time is coming when things will be evened up, and then the rich men will get it in the neck, where they ought to have it."

Davis was wound up to say much more on the same subject, when the justice choked him off, and ordered the constable to clear his office.

Outside, Davis started to harangue the crowd in demagogue style, but after listening to him for a few minutes they broke up and he was left with only Ready and Hengler for an audience, and the three adjourned to the tavern for a drink.

As for Fred, he felt that he was now thrown upon the world, and hereafter would have to hoe his own row.

Not but he had been hoeing it pretty well since his mother's death.

Still he could count on a roof and a bed whether he had enough to eat or not.

Now he was without roof and bed, and would have to earn his meals.

However, he wouldn't have to provide food for his step-father.

The last link between them was broken when Davis tried to have him sent to prison on the false charge of being responsible for the burning of the cottage.

Parsons, the postmaster, who also kept a general store on Main street, knowing that Fred was out on his uppers, offered him a temporary job at his store to act as deliverer of goods, collector of orders, and mail messenger, as his son who looked after those things had just been taken down with the measles.

Fred gratefully accepted his offer.

He had no place to go, and all his small possessions had been destroyed by the fire, including the few dollars he was saving against a rainy day.

He went along with the postmaster, and was sent out right away on his first round.

He dined with the clerk when he got back, helped to put up orders, and then started out to deliver them.

At half-past five he started for the railroad station, three miles away, with two mail-bags, to meet the trains going east and west, and bring back the mail the postal clerk dropped off.

He performed his duties to the satisfaction of the postmaster, and after supper helped in the store.

After the store closed at half-past nine he was shown to a small room over the kitchen, and, turning in, slept like a top until morning.

Thus things went on for two weeks, during which time Fred saw his step-father two or three times at a distance, and learned that he had secured enough lumber on the strength of his insurance policy to rebuild the first story of the cottage, in which work he was being helped by Ready and Hengler.

As the postmaster's son was rapidly getting well, he couldn't hope to hold his job much longer.

He had received offers from other people who regarded him with favor, but he believed he could do better by leaving Fairview and trying his luck in New York.

If Fred imagined that his step-father had forgotten him since the fire, because he did not come near him, he was mistaken.

Hank Davis never had had any fatherly feeling for the boy, though he had treated him fairly well while his wife lived.

Since the fire he had hated him savagely and tried to think of some way to get square with him.

He tried to interest Ready and Hengler in the subject, but those men feared to get in trouble, for they had seen how well the boy was liked in the village.

About this time a rough-and-ready stranger made his appearance in the place.

He appeared nightly at the tavern, and Davis soon got chummy with him.

The man was a New York crook, who had found it to his interest to leave the big city because he was wanted by the police.

He was traveling by easy stages to Boston, and he put up for a while at Fairview.

The village having a prosperous loog, he thought he might pull off some job there that would put some money in his pocket.

He pumped Hank Davis about the people of the place, and learned who were living on the sunny side, as the saying is.

He listened to Hank's private orations about the trusts, the



high cost of living, and the impositions of the rich on the poor.

He soon sized the man up for what he was—a discontented fellow who needed only to be spurred on to commit a crime.

Of course, he found out Hank's sentiments with regard to his son.

He learned that the boy was working for the postmaster in his store, and also driving the mail wagon.

He also found out that Fred carried a big mail from the station on his late afternoon trip.

This mail was largely made up of registered letters, money orders, and a proportion of small cash in ordinary letters, all addressed to a manufacturing house that the villagers regarded as the most important industry in the place.

The crook thought the matter over, and then made his plans.

He enticed Davis into his scheme on the plea that if the mail was held up, his step-son would be held responsible, and might be sent to prison.

That caught Hank, and he agreed to help his new friend.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE ROBBERY OF THE MAIL.

"This is my last day in Fairview, Dick," said Fred to his best friend, Dick Harvey, who lived with his folks on a nearby farm, within half a mile of the burned Davis cottage.

"Then you have fully made up your mind to go to New York?" said Dick.

"Yes. I see no great prospects for me here. I can get work at small wages in the village, but I am ambitious to do something better than that. A fellow with push and energy can always make his way in a big city, unless his luck is dead against him. There is a limit to most people's success in a village like this, but in a city there are a hundred opportunities for those who know how to make the most of their chances," said Fred.

"Well, I don't blame you for trying to better yourself, but I hate to see you go. We have always been such good friends."

"We can continue to be friends, though parted. I will write to you regularly, and I expect you will answer my letters."

"Sure I will. Are you going to the station for the mail now?"

"Yes, jump in and come along. It will be our last chance for a talk, for I'm going by the mail train in the morning."

It is unnecessary to dwell on the various things they talked about on the way to the station, as they do not concern this story.

Five minutes after they got to the station the east-bound train dropped its mail-bag and took on the one bag Fred brought for it.

Twenty minutes later the west-bound train stopped, and a similar exchange of mail was made.

The village express agent was on hand to get the express matter, and as he had a lot of packages of various sizes to carry, he did not get away as soon as Fred did.

Dusk was falling when Fred and Dick started on their return trip.

It was dark when the wagon reached the top of a low hill a mile from the village.

The lights of Fairview were in plain sight from that spot, but as the wagon drove down the hill the trees of a small wood near the bottom shut them off.

The road turned into and passed through the wood for a short distance, passing over a small wooden bridge which spanned a narrow stream.

Half way through this wood the horse came to a sudden stop, caused by contact with a rope stretched across the road.

The boys were thrown backward off the seat and landed on the mail-bags.

Before they could recover their feet two men sprang into the wagon from behind and, seizing them, held them down.

The men wore dark handkerchiefs over their faces under their eyes, thus masking their features.

"Lie still, both of you, or we'll give you a tap on the nuts," said a muffled voice, in a menacing tone.

Fred put up a struggle, anyway, and received a blow in the jaw.

The boys were yanked out of the wagon, taken up among the trees, and tied back to back against one of them.

Then the men left them and returned to the road.

They removed their handkerchiefs and showed the faces of Hank Davis and his friend the crook.

The rope across the road was taken down and thrown into the wagon.

Then the men mounted to the seat and drove away in the direction of the village.

But they didn't go there.

They turned off into a branch which led away from Fairview and passed through another wood two miles distant.

The boys were not only bound to the tree, but gagged with their handkerchiefs.

Dick seemed to have given up the sponge, for he stood quiet on his side.

Fred, however, was not of the yielding kind, and he made a desperate effort to get free.

In their hurry to get away with the wagon and the mail-bags, the men had not been over careful in tying the boys, so that the frantic struggles of Fred soon loosened up the rope and enabled him to get his hands free.

The rest was only the work of a few minutes.

Then he released Dick.

"What in creation does this all mean?" cried Dick, as soon as he got rid of the gag.

"What does it mean?" said Fred. "What do you suppose it means? The mail wagon has been stopped, we've been made prisoners, and those two rascals have stolen the pouches."

"They wouldn't dare rob the mail wagon."

"Come on and we'll see."

"It must have been a joke."

"I don't believe it was a joke," said Fred, as they hurried back to the road. "There, the wagon is gone, just as I thought."

"What are you going to do?"

"The village is less than a mile from here. The only thing for us to do is to go on there and give the alarm."

They started forward as fast as they could go on a quick trot.

"They drove on this way, for I heard the wheels sounding in the direction of the village," said Dick.

"I know they did, and there's no doubt in my mind that they turned off along the branch which leads to Elmwood. I think I'll take to the branch myself and go on to Elmwood, while you can go on to Fairview and notify the postmaster of what happened to us and the mail."

Fred having decided to follow that plan in the hope of getting on the track of the robbers in advance of the efforts made by the postmaster, when he and Dick reached the branch road they parted company.

It seemed like a forlorn hope for a person on foot to think he stood any real chance of overtaking a light wagon drawn by a smart horse, but Fred believed that he might get a clew to the men at Elmwood, which was three miles from the junction of the branch.

At any rate, he felt that he was responsible for the mail pouches while in his care, and he determined to outwit the robbers if he could.

"It's tough luck for this to happen to me on my last day in the village," he told himself as he hurried along the branch road. "Suppose the rascals get off altogether with the mail, there's going to be an awful howl from the post-office department. I'll be blamed, of course, and maybe I'll be held on suspicion of being an accessory. However, I've got Dick Harvey as evidence that we were taken unawares. It's a good thing for me he was in the wagon. The postmaster will tear his hair when Dick reports the hold-up and robbery to him. He'll put the constable on the job right away, but by the time he gets busy the robbers may be far enough away to elude capture. It's a bad state of affairs."

Fred reached the wood through which the road ran.

The man who owned the wooded property on both sides of the road had fenced it in in the same way as the fields were cut off.

Thus there was no break in the fence at any point along the road.

Fred was half way through the wood when he saw that the rails had been removed from a spot and thrown one side.

This had apparently been done to admit the passage of a wagon.

The boy stopped and wondered if the owner of the property had done this, and he was the only one who had the right to do such a thing, or whether the robbers had done it for reasons of their own.

Examining the ground by matchlight, Fred saw the impression of the wheels of a light wagon similar to the one that carried the mail where it turned from the road through the opening in the fence and proceeded into the wood beyond.

"I believe the robbers have turned off here to find some secluded place where they can go through the mail pouches," thought Fred. "The road leads right to Elmwood, and they don't know but that place is connected with Fairview by tele-



phone, or at any rate by telegraph, and that by the time they get there the police may have received word to be on the watch for them, in which event they would stand a good chance of being caught. Still, after tying Dick and me in the wood, they would figure that it would be some time before the postmaster heard about the robbery of the mail wagon, which would give them ample time to pass through Elmwood and get well along on their way beyond that place. At the same time knowing that they were likely to be seen driving through Elmwood, they foresaw that they would be furnishing a possible clew to the direction they were going. Putting myself in their place, I think I could turn into this wood right here, go through the mail pouches, put all the money I found in my pocket, and then abandon the bags and the wagon, and make my way across the country to the nearest railroad station. I have an idea that is the plan they have followed, and I don't think I can do better than to follow the wagon on the chance that my supposition is right."

The wood was open enough in places for a wagon to wind in and out among the trees, and Fred, by lighting a match occasionally, was able to keep on the wagon track.

Suddenly he saw a small hut ahead, and, coming close to it, distinguished a horse and wagon tied to a tree.

No one appeared to be in sight, so Fred walked up to the vehicle and recognized it as the postmaster's property.

"So I've tracked the rascals to the right place after all," he said to himself. "How fortunate! I staked my chances on a guess, and have won. The men are doubtless in this hut. I'll investigate."

The door was closed, but Fred found a small opening at the back, through which a dim light could be detected within.

Looking through the opening, the boy saw two men inside with a pile of letters in front of them, which they were opening with penknives.

The mail pouches, which had been slit open, lay across one another near by.

The registered mail had already been plundered, and the rascals were now going through the ordinary letters.

As fast as they opened an envelope they looked into it, and if it did not hold money, they tossed it aside; if it did, they abstracted the money, usually small pieces of silver, and went on with the next letter.

The mail was extra large that evening, and the two men were reaping a small harvest of coin and bills.

This each tossed into his hat, which lay in front of him to catch it.

A candle, speared on a pointed stick, stood between the hats.

By its light Fred was able to get a fair view of the men's faces, no longer masked by the handkerchiefs.

He was not only astonished, but staggered, to recognize in one of them the not over handsome countenance of his step-father.

The other man he had once seen in the store, where he came to buy some smoking tobacco, and Fred knew he was a stranger to Fairview.

Fred had never suspected Hank Davis as being anything worse than a shirker of the responsibilities of life since ill luck soured him.

Now he had evidence that the man had involved himself in a very serious crime.

The situation embarrassed the boy.

His duty left him no alternative but to try and bring his step-father and his companion to justice.

It was not pleasant for him to reflect that if these men were caught, as it seemed more than likely they would be now that he had penetrated their identity and could put the police on their track, that he would be the means of sending his mother's second husband to prison for a long term.

While he looked through the opening into the hut the men finished their work, and the stranger to Fairview seized both hats and dumped their contents out in a common pile.

Replacing the hats as before, he began dividing the plunder, dropping a bill into his own hat, then one into Davis', and so on until the paper money was exhausted.

Then he took up the silver and divided that in the same way.

Fred watched the proceedings intently, and at the same time tried to think how he could prevent the pair from leaving with their ill-gotten gains.

He could think of no way of overcoming two men by his own exertions alone.

He would have to knock both of them out practically at once, and that looked like an impossibility.

He recollected that there was a long whip in the wagon, with a loaded handle.

It was just the thing to put a man to sleep if struck in the right place.

To put two men to sleep, one after the other, was difficult of execution.

The robbery was such a serious matter, however, that anything with a chance of success was worth trying.

Fred walked over to the wagon to test the weight of the whip.

Getting up on the wheel to reach it where it stood in its socket, he noticed the long piece of rope in the vehicle.

That gave him another idea, so he took both the whip and the rope.

Expecting the men to appear any moment, he hastily made a slip noose at one end of the rope.

Fred's idea was to spread the noose in front of the door and catch one of the men at a disadvantage when he stepped into it.

This he started to do.

But as he reached the corner of the hut the men suddenly came out, and Fred had to act on the spur of the moment or not at all.

He saw that the men were close together, and he rushed up to them and dropped the noose over both of their heads.

As it fell about their arms he jumped back and pulled it tight.

At that the jump was only partly accomplished, and it was well the boy had his wits about him.

The rascals taken by surprise stopped and, uttering imprecations, started to struggle to free themselves.

Hank did not recognize his step-son in the dark, but both saw that it was a boy who had caught them.

Before they recovered their wits Fred ran around them with the rope twice, and then tripping them up, threw his weight upon them, and while holding them down he fastened the end of the rope at the back, thus making them helpless to use their arms.

Running to the wagon, he got the rope with which the horse was tied, and, returning, tied the left leg of Hank to the right leg of the crook.

This he accomplished in spite of their struggles, and then he had them dead to rights.

And they knew it, too.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### FRED'S CLEVER EXPLOIT.

"Well, you pair of mail robbers, I guess you'll get what's coming to you," said Fred, in a tone of triumph, forgetting for the moment the fate he was bringing on his step-father.

Hank Davis recognized his voice and uttered an ejaculation of surprise, for he had not expected the boy would get away from the wood where he was left tied.

Then he said something that would not look well in print.

"Cut us loose, you young villain," he cried. "Do you hear me?"

"I guess not. You chaps have the money in your pockets you have stolen from the mail pouches. I am responsible that it reaches the post-office. The only way I can get it there is by taking you two with it," said Fred.

"Do you want to have me—your step-father—sent to prison, you whelp? Where is your filial regard? Ain't I your step-father?"

"Unfortunately you are. I wish you were not. You are a disgrace to yourself and to the memory of my mother."

"Let us go and we'll divide up with you," said Hank, thinking to bribe the boy, which was the last thing he could do.

"Do you think I would do such a thing, Mr. Davis? I have no desire to become a thief, although I have hardly money to shift for myself."

"If you won't divide," said the crook, "release us and we'll hand over all the money we took from the letters."

"Not much. I'd look fine returning the money in that shape, wouldn't I, with the letters all cut open and mixed up. I'd be asked how I recovered it in that shape, and I'd have to tell the postmaster that I got it by letting you chaps go free. What would the post-office inspector say to that, for one is sure to come to the village to investigate this robbery? I'd hate to hear his opinion on the subject. Such a move on my part would give me a nice showing up. It would ruin my reputation with the villagers. No, sir; I intend to take you back with me, and the wreck of the mail and the bags will go, too, as evidence against you."

"How are you going to get us back?" sneered the crook.

"We can't walk, and we wouldn't if we could."

"You'll return in the wagon."

"How are you going to get us into the wagon?"



"I'll find a way, don't you worry."

The men cursed him roundly, but Fred, turning his back on them, went into the hut, stuffed the letters into the two bags, just as they came, and hauled them to the wagon, into which he pitched them.

Pushing the bags under the seat, he considered how he would be able to get his prisoners into the vehicle.

He let down the back of the wagon as the first step.

Then he went to the hut and pulled the rickety door off its crazy hinges.

He placed this as a sliding plane at the back of the vehicle.

Returning to the hut, he found just what he wanted—a couple of pieces of hay rope.

Kneeling beside the helpless robbers, he tied their wrists together on both sides.

This would hold them as well as the long rope, which he removed from about their arms, leaving the noose where it was.

His next move was to take the horse out of the shafts.

Leading the animal close to where the prisoners lay, he tied the end of the rope to the horse's collar.

"Get up, Dobbin," he said.

The horse started and dragged the swearing rascals over to the foot of the door.

Next he brought the horse around in front of the wagon, threw the rope over the seat, and hitched it to the animal again.

Starting the horse once more, the pair of robbers were roughly dragged into the vehicle.

He harnessed the horse to the wagon again and, getting in, secured the rascals so they couldn't roll out.

"I'll get square with you for this, young fellow," hissed the crook.

"We'll both get square with you," roared Hank, furiously.

Fred paid no attention to their remarks, but getting out, led the horse and wagon carefully through the wood and out into the road.

With the vehicle headed for the main road that ran to Fairview, Fred got on to the seat and started for the village at a rapid clip.

During the trip the men tried every way they could to make terms with him, but without success.

When he reached the outskirts of Fairview he met the constable, with Dick and the postmaster, in the officer's light wagon.

Another officer was also with the party.

All hands recognized Fred and the rig he was driving, and the constable reined in, as also did the boy.

"You've found the wagon, I see," said the postmaster. "Did the rascals abandon it alongside the road somewhere?"

"No. I caught them and they're in the wagon, with the mail-bags."

"You caught them?" cried the surprised postmaster. "How could you catch the two of them without help? But maybe you had help."

"No, I had no help. I caught them through a piece of strategy."

"You recovered the mail, then, all right?"

"I have recovered it, but it's not all right. The men opened all the letters, including the registered mail, and have the money in their pockets now."

By this time the constable and his assistant had alighted and clambered into Fred's wagon, where they saw the bound prisoners.

"You seem to have made a good job of it, however you did it, Fisher," said Constable Smith, approvingly. "Why, hang it, one of them is your step-father, Hank Davis!" he added, in a tone of astonishment. "Haven't you made some mistake here?"

"No, sir, I haven't made any mistake. I regret that one of the robbers is my step-father, but that isn't my fault. How he came to be mixed up in this business gets me, but there is no doubt about it, for I saw him and his companion opening the letters in a hut in the wood down on the branch road to Elmwood. He's got his share of the plunder in his clothes, as you will discover when you search him."

"Then he is up against a very serious crime, Fisher, and I am sorry for your sake. You'll have to testify against him in court, and there isn't much doubt, if he's convicted, that he'll get a long term, for the Government shows scant mercy to mail robbers," said the constable.

With the constable's assistant in the wagon Fisher drove on, and the chief officer followed in his wagon.

They did not go direct to the post-office, where a crowd was

assembled, as the news of the robbery had spread all over the village.

Instead, by Constable Smith's directions, Fred drove to the lock-up.

On arriving there the two men were partly unbound and marched into the little office.

Here they were questioned, but refused to answer.

Hank's name was entered on the book, while his companion's name was entered as John Doe.

The men were then searched, and a nearly equal sum of money in bills and small change was found on each.

The constable entered the amounts in the book, then locked the money up in his safe to produce as evidence against the men.

The letters were sorted and a note made of the different bundles, and then they were turned over to the postmaster.

The money orders were noted down with the amount in total, and these were placed in the safe as evidence.

Then the two robbers were locked up in separate cells, while the postmaster, Fred and Dick drove to the post-office with the slit bags, letters and other mail matter, the larger part of which was addressed to the manufacturing company of the village.

As there are always eyes about a village, nothing that passes escapes notice.

So it was that one or two persons, boys, maybe, saw the two wagons drive up to the lock-up and the two prisoners taken into the office.

They hung around the window with their noses flattened against the panes in an endeavor to learn all that was taking place inside.

When the prisoners were marched to their cells they hurried off to the post-office to carry the news to the crowd which had congregated there and was canvassing the situation.

Part of the crowd at once started for the lock-up, and were just in time to see the constable locking the outer door.

They learned nothing more than what they heard from the boys—that two prisoners had been arrested in connection with the mail robbery.

Neither the constable nor his assistant was giving out any information.

The disappointed bunch returned to the post-office to find that the postmaster had got back, and with him Fred Fisher, who drove the mail wagon.

The impression prevailed from seeing the mail pouches taken into the post-office that they had been recovered in the same condition they came from the train.

To allay the anxiety of those who were expecting letters, and to prevent the curious learning the true state of affairs, the postmaster refused to make any public statement about the robbery.

All he would say was that, to the best of his knowledge, the mail was all right, but for reasons, which he did not think it necessary to explain, the distribution of mail outside of newspapers and such things would be delayed.

The crowd dwindled somewhat after that, but more people than usual hung around the postmaster's store that evening.

## CHAPTER V.

### FRED ARRIVES IN NEW YORK.

The mail robbery altered Fred's arrangements about leaving the village next morning.

He would have to appear against the robbers when they were brought before the justice.

The postmaster said he could continue on at the store until he was no longer needed in the case.

That suited the postmaster's son first rate, for he wouldn't have to resume his work until Fred left.

At ten next morning a big crowd gathered about the office of the justice.

Only a few of the more important citizens were permitted to enter, as there was little room for outsiders to congregate there.

All were eager to catch a sight of the robbers, who were pictured as rascally looking chaps.

No one as yet knew that one of them was Hank Davis, and his appearance in the role of one of the prisoners was certain to create great surprise.

Prisoners were always brought to the office by a rear route, and as this fact was known, quite a bunch assembled at the point on the back street where the constable fetched them.

Constable Smith, however, disappointed them by fetching the prisoners an hour ahead of time and holding them under guard in the justice's barn.

Fred and Dick reached the office by the rear way, and were



in attendance when the village magistrate took his seat at his desk.

The crowd outside filled the sidewalk and part of the street opposite the office.

Inside, the favored ones occupied the chairs outside the railing and stood wherever standing room was to be had.

As soon as the justice announced that the court was open the prisoners were brought in, and Hank Davis was recognized with a buzz of astonishment.

Unfavorably as he was regarded in the village, no one ever suspected him as capable of committing any crime of a serious nature.

The prisoners pleaded not guilty to the charge, and then Fred was called upon to tell his story, which he did.

He said that during the commission of the robbery the men had been masked, and he had not recognized them.

It was only when he subsequently tracked them to the hut in the wood, where he had seen their faces without the handkerchief masks, that he recognized his step-father, and also remembered having seen the other man once before when he entered the postmaster's store to make a purchase.

He described how he had seen the men opening the letters and taking out their contents, and how they had afterwards divided the money.

Then he told the clever way by which he caught them and got them in the wagon, and the spectators were much interested.

One exclaimed "Good boy! You're as smart as they come."

Dick corroborated the story of the hold-up, but could not identify the men.

It was clear if the men had not been followed by Fred there would have been little evidence against them had they been caught later.

The postmaster testified to the fact that the two mail-bags had been cut open and rifled of their contents, newspapers and other third-class matter excepted.

He said he and his son had gone carefully over the letters, including those which had come registered, and had noted that the sum of \$110 had been extracted.

He could not swear that this was the exact sum the letters had contained, but it was as close as he could get to it.

Money orders to the amount of \$90 figured in the robbery.

These had all been recovered.

A representative of the manufacturing company had made a copy of all orders addressed to it, so that the originals could be turned over to the court as evidence, together with the cut envelopes.

He handed several small bundles, carefully tied up, to the justice.

Constable Smith testified to the fact that on searching the men \$65 had been found on Davis and \$70 on the other man, a large part of it in small silver, the bulk of which he assumed had come out of the mail.

The prisoners, on being asked what they had to say, declined to make any statement, and the justice held them pending the action of the Post-office Department.

The postmaster had already forwarded his official report to the department, and no further steps would be taken until an inspector appeared and assumed charge of the case.

That official turned up on the following day, and after he had made his investigation the Government took charge of the prisoners and Fred was put under a bond, furnished by Dick's father, to appear in court when wanted.

He was at liberty to go to New York or elsewhere so long as he kept his bondsman in touch with his whereabouts, and as the men were not expected to be tried for several weeks, he decided to leave the village.

He landed at the Forty-second street depot with a few dollars in his pocket and the world before him.

On the train he made the acquaintance of an elderly gentleman, to whom he explained his situation.

The gentleman said that he was going to put up at the Grand Union Hotel, which stood on Fourth avenue across from the depot, and he offered Fred half a dollar to carry his two suitcases there.

The boy eagerly accepted his offer, for he needed the money, and accompanied the old gentleman to the baggage department to get the cases.

Walking ahead of the gentleman, Fred started for the hotel.

His country air attracted the attention of a couple of young toughs, who fancied he was an easy mark, and they followed him.

On the way across the wide street they were joined by a third youth, one of their own stamp, and their plan of action was arranged.

The two big fellows were to come on Fred from either side, while the small boy was to jump on him from behind.

All were in position for business when Fred reached the corner where the hotel stood.

The two young rascals swooped down on Fred, each intent on wresting one of the valises from him.

But they didn't know the boy they were dealing with.

Fred dropped the bags and, quick as lightning, struck out with both fists.

He caught one on the jaw and the other on the chest.

They went staggering backward.

The old gentleman saw what was being pulled off, and he put the third boy to flight with a blow from his cane.

Then he went to Fred's aid as the two young ruffians made a jump at the boy to revenge themselves for the blows they had received.

Fred, being a lusty lad, felt no fear of the outcome of the difficulty.

He prodded one of the assailants in the nose, but before he could do anything more the old gentleman's cane routed the rascals and they fled down the street, badly worsted.

Fred landed the old gentleman's suitcases before the desk of the hotel and received the promised fifty cents, which the boy thought he had easily earned.

Promising to call on his new acquaintance if he could, Fred started back to the depot to get his own valise, a small one, which contained all of his few worldly possessions.

He inquired of the baggage man where he would be likely to find a cheap lodging.

The man told him that the leading morning papers were full of advertisements of rooms to let, and he could easily make a selection on the east side.

"You can probably find a morning paper at one of the news-stands on this street, though the afternoon papers are on sale now. I would advise you to go to the lodging-house around the corner on Third avenue, where you can leave your valise till you find a room to suit you. Have you got a trunk here?"

"No."

"You can get a small room to yourself for 25 cents a day, and you will find a cheap restaurant on the same block. You can look for a better room in a small private house to-morrow morning. You should be able to get one for \$1.50 a week."

Fred thanked him and decided to adopt his suggestion.

He was told that he would find Third avenue by walking down Forty-second street and following the elevated loop line which ran to the station on that thoroughfare.

"The main line of the elevated runs up and down Third avenue, so you can't go astray," said the baggage man, turning away.

Fred followed directions and reached the avenue in question.

The lodging-house was near the corner, with a stairs running up to the reading-room, where the office was.

He went up, told the clerk what he wanted, paid his quarter, and was given a small, box-like room, which he was only to occupy for sleeping purposes.

He turned his grip over to the clerk and received a check for it, then with one of the cards of the house in his pocket, so he could find his way back, he started out to get his dinner, for it was about half-past twelve, and see a little of the city.

He walked straight down Third avenue till he reached the Cooper Union at the junction of that avenue with Fourth avenue, where both merge into the Bowery.

Here he saw a small park-like enclosure furnished with seats and a drinking fountain.

He sat down for a rest, with the building of the Cooper Union facing him.

There were a number of idle men seated there basking in the afternoon sunshine.

Fred got into conversation with a respectable looking man who occupied the same bench.

The man had a sad, preoccupied air, like one in misfortune, or who carried a weight on his mind.

He wore a cap and a dark blue peajacket like men connected with some branch of the shipping business.

An observer might have sized him up as the mate of a large coaster, or a Sound or river steamboat, or perhaps a pilot off duty.

Something about him attracted Fred, and he ventured to speak to him.

As the time passed they grew quite friendly, and the boy told the man that he was a stranger to the city, and had come from the Connecticut village of Fairview to get work in the metropolis.

"What's your name?" asked the stranger.

"Fred Fisher."



"Mine is David Wambold. I am captain of a large sloop in the coasting trade."

As he spoke his voice changed and a shadow crossed his face.

"Your vessel is in this port, then?" said Fred.

"Yes," replied the man, in a low tone, shifting his legs in an uneasy way.

"Waiting for a cargo, I suppose?" said Fred.

"No. The cargo is aboard. We sail up the Sound to-night."

"I see. You are taking a breathing spell here in the meanwhile."

"I am waiting for the man who goes with me."

"One of your crew?"

"No. He's the owner of the sloop. We carry no crew, only a boy. He ran away the other day, and Markley, that's the owner, went uptown to get another to fill his place. I am here to meet them. They may come any minute."

"You are familiar with New York, I guess. Do you think I will have much trouble finding work?" said Fred.

"Have you a trade?"

"No."

"That's too bad. If you had the groundwork of a trade, you would have an advantage. Unskilled labor is usually a drug on the market of a big city. You will have to consult the want advertisements in one of the morning papers and take your chance with the others after the same job."

"The fact that I'm not acquainted with the city will be a handicap, too, I suppose?"

"It will, I regret to say. You could hardly fill an errand boy's position without knowing the lay of the streets."

"I will have to look for an indoor situation and get acquainted with the city at my leisure. In any case, it is necessary that I get work very soon, for I can't afford to be idle."

"Say you so, young fellow?" said a tall, well-dressed, dark-featured man who had come up behind them unobserved. "Then I can offer you a job right away at good pay."

Wambold and Fred turned quickly, the former with a little shudder, for he recognized the voice of the speaker.

"No, no, Markley," he said, with some energy, "you don't want this boy. Where is the lad you went after?"

"Never mind him. I didn't get him, if you want to know the truth," said the newcomer, sharply. "And why not this boy? If he is looking for work and can't afford to be idle, he is just the party to go with us on the sloop."

"He's from the country and knows nothing about the water," said Wambold. "He won't do at all."

"Pooh! If he's from the country, so much the better. Are you a stranger in New York, young man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Got any friends here?"

"No, sir, not one."

Do you object to taking a short trip up the Sound and back? I'll pay you one dollar a day, and your living will cost you nothing as long as you are connected with the sloop."

"I have no knowledge of boats, sir."

"You don't require much knowledge. Wambold here, who's the skipper, will post you in your duties. I promise you you'll have an easy time, and if you will stick after the first trip I'll raise your pay to \$10 a week. Those are good wages for a boy aboard a coaster; but you look like a strong, clever lad, and somehow I've taken a fancy to your face. Will you come?"

"No, no," protested Wambold again.

"But I say yes, if the boy wants to try the work. Don't you know that we sail this evening, and that we can't go without a stout boy to help you work the craft? What do you say, young man, will you help us out of our predicament? If you want to quit when we get back in a few days you will be at liberty to do so. Say you'll go and I'll make your pay \$1.50 a day while you're with us."

The offer looked too good to be refused, so Fred said he'd take it if the speaker was willing to put up with his ignorance of the business.

"I'm taking you with that understanding. What's your name?"

Fred told him, and learned that the man's was Richard Markley.

"Where's your trunk?" said Markley.

"I've only got a grip, and I left that at this lodging-house."

The boy showed the man the card.

"Very good. I'll go up there with you and get it. Now, Wambold, get aboard the sloop and have supper ready for us when we turn up."

With those words Markley linked arms with Fred and led the way toward the Ninth street station of the elevated road, a block away.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FRED SAILS ON THE PELICAN.

Fred thought that Markley treated his skipper in a rather overbearing way, but ascribed it to the fact that he was the owner of the sloop, and that perhaps his failure to secure the experienced boy he was after had put him out of humor somewhat.

He had taken a liking to Wambold, which was one of the reasons he decided so quickly to take the trip up the Sound.

Of course, the chief reason was the opportunity to add a substantial sum, as he rated money, to his limited capital, which he feared was hardly enough to see him through the experience of finding a job in the city.

He counted on receiving at least four or five days' pay, with board and lodging thrown in, before the sloop returned, and if things went all right he would be in a position to make another trip at the same rate.

On the way uptown after his grip, and on the way back downtown, way down to Coenties Slip, on the East Side, he found Markley an entertaining companion, and rather congratulated himself on acquiring such an employer.

The man pumped him freely, but did it in such an off-hand way that Fred found no fault with his curiosity, and gave him frank replies.

The sloop lay at the end of the slip, and was a weather-beaten craft painted a rusty black.

Her name, the Pelican, appeared in raised letters on her stern.

She had one good-sized mainsail and two jibs.

Smoke was coming out of a stovepipe forward which projected through the deck, which was raised a foot higher there than amidships.

Aft was the cabin, the roof of which, equipped with a small skylight, was raised about eighteen inches higher than the side.

Between the door and the sternpost was a low space, called the cockpit.

Here was the steering gear and a small hooded binnacle.

There was an open scuttle forward, out of which floated a thin smoke from the cooking going on below.

Fred was somewhat surprised that the captain of the craft was expected to do the cooking, but later he found out that the boy who deserted the craft had acted as cook, and now that he was gone, Wambold had to do it since there was no one else to attend to it.

Fred followed Markley into the cabin, which was not lighted, as the afternoon was young yet, though preparations for supper were going on forward in what was called the galley.

As a matter of fact, the two men had breakfasted at five and had dined at eleven.

The cabin was a dingy place, quite in keeping with the general aspect of the rusty craft.

The woodwork was dark, anyway, and time with continuous service had made it many shades darker.

The table was set for three—a plate, flanked with knives, forks and spoons at the top, another garnished at the foot, and a third at one side.

There were no staterooms, as space was limited, but instead were two bunks sunk between panels and elevated on lockers, hidden by chintz curtains running on brass rods and divided in half in the center.

"Sit down, Fisher, and make yourself at home," said Markley, in a friendly way. "You are not under orders yet, and are for the time being a privileged character. After supper you can take your bag forward, and Wambold will show you where your bunk is. Then you can dump your things into the locker under it."

"There isn't much to dump out," laughed the boy. "Owing to the fire that destroyed our cottage a month ago, I lost about everything I possessed."

"If you're short of anything you want, let me know, and I'll advance you the money to buy it," said Markley.

"Thank you, but I guess I can get along for a week without buying anything."

"In a week you ought to have money enough to buy a trunk and a full outfit."

"How far up the Sound are you going this trip?" said Fred.

"Oh, quite a way. Do you know where Port Jefferson is?"

"I have an idea."

"Well, we are bound for that place, though we are likely to put in at two or three other places before we get there. I have quite a number of friends along the north shore, and they



like to have me drop in and call on them when I'm up their way. Then it is not improbable I may get a load at Port Jefferson to carry up the Connecticut River. In that case your trip will be extended maybe over a matter of ten days or more, but I guess you won't mind that as long as you're well paid for your time," said Markley.

The entrance of Wambold put an end to the conversation, for Markley took an afternoon paper out of his pocket and, pulling a camp-stool to the door, sat down and began to read.

The skipper carried a smoking dish of rabbit stew in his hands which he placed on the table.

"Can I help you, Mr. Wambold?" asked Fred, who wanted to make himself useful.

"No, you can't," said Markley, putting a veto on his good intentions. Wambold can attend to things himself without help. The passage is so narrow and the galley so small that you'd only interfere with one another. After the meal is over you can wash the dishes if you're so anxious to get busy."

So the skipper brought everything from the galley himself, and in a few minutes announced that supper was ready.

Markley threw down the paper and told Fred to sit up, while he and the captain took their places at the head and foot.

Everything being on the table, the three fell to eating.

Fred, having had a good dinner around one o'clock, he was not very hungry, but the rabbit stew was so good that he found no difficulty in getting away with his share of it.

After the meal, which was rather a silent one, as Wambold showed no disposition to talk, and Markley had little to say, the two men adjourned to the cockpit, where the skipper got out his pipe and began to smoke moodily, and Markley lighted up a cigar.

Fred removed the dishes to the galley and washed them. Then he put everything away where they belonged, after which he was told to remain forward until invited to come aft.

He crawled out of the galley through the scuttle opening and amused himself looking up and down and across the East River, and at what he saw going on around him.

The voice of Markley was borne to his ears in low tones that prevented him from making out a single word the man said.

He heard an occasional remark from Wambold, but the skipper also spoke too low for his words to carry far.

It was now six, and dusk was falling upon the great city.

Lights began to appear along South street, in the saloons and other places that kept open after the general work of the day was done.

Finally darkness descended, and the stars grew brighter until they spangled the entire sky.

By that time the tide was nearly at flood, and Markley ordered the sloop unmoored, the sails hoisted and the craft headed up the river.

To accomplish this Fred's services were called upon, and Wambold showed him what to do and how to do it.

The captain stood at the wheel, while Markley sat on the camp-stool and conversed with him.

The wind being light, the sloop made little progress up the river.

Fred, after having been shown a narrow bunk at one side of the galley, had been told that he could turn in when he felt like it.

As it was early yet, he did not feel like availing himself of this permission, so he sat on the deck forward and watched the lights and the shadowy buildings that slowly slipped past on either side of the river.

After a while the wind freshened some and the sloop went faster through the water.

Markley stepped on the roof of the cabin and began pacing up and down along the weather side.

The middle part of the deck, with its closed hatch, lay between him and Fred.

The boy sat with his back toward him and against the mast, in the space that intervened between the bulging inner jib.

No sound reached Fred's ears except the steady tramp of the owner's boots on the planks, and the swish and lap of the water against the bows.

After a time Markley finished his second cigar and disappeared into the cabin, where he turned up the lamp and busied himself with the perusal of sundry house diagrams which he took out of his own locker.

Fred would have liked to go aft and talk with the skipper, but realizing that he was the "crew," and had been instructed to remain forward unless otherwise directed, he remained where he was till he grew sleepy, then he descended into the

stuffy galley and went to bed in the bunk which was just wide enough to hold him.

He soon fell asleep and knew nothing more till he was awakened by the sound of rattling pans in the cooking compartment.

He opened his eyes, found it was daylight, and that Wambold was engaged with culinary operations.

"Good-morning, Mr. Wambold," he said, in a cheery tone, "I suppose it's time for me to turn out?"

"Good-morning," responded the skipper, in a gloomy tone.

"Yes, it's time for you to get up. You can peel that pan of potatoes."

Fred tumbled out, got into his clothes, and taking the pan and a knife went on deck, where he had more room, and went to work.

The sloop was in the Sound and sailing along easily under a moderate breeze.

Glancing aft, he saw Markley at the wheel.

He wondered if the owner always went with the sloop, for it looked as if his services were needed.

That, however, was none of his business, so he did not think any more about it.

The sun was up and the morning a fine one.

The novelty of being aboard of a sailing craft made the boy feel quite at home in his new situation.

He guessed he'd stick by the sloop for a while, for \$10 a week, with board and lodging thrown in, was a whole lot better than he could hope to make ashore.

He figured that he could save a bunch of money in the course of a few weeks, and that was attractive to him.

Had he been familiar with the wages usually paid boys under conditions like his own, he would have wondered why Markley was so liberal.

He lost little time over the potatoes, and handed the pan down to Wambold.

"Have you ever done any cooking?" asked the skipper, in the same sober way he had acted toward him since the owner engaged him.

"Oh, yes," answered Fred. "After my mother died I did nearly all the cooking at the cottage for Mr. Davis and myself."

"You mean your step-father?"

"Yes."

"I think you told me that the cottage was burned down one night?"

"Yes. It was almost wholly destroyed."

"That's how you came to be thrown on the world, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"It was rented by your step-father, I presume?"

"No. It belonged to my mother, but she willed it to Mr. Davis."

"Was it insured?"

"It was."

"Your step-father would have provided for you if you had remained with him, wouldn't he?"

"No; he was glad to get rid of me."

"Ah! Then you did not get along well with him?"

"I did not. He was lazy and shiftless, was something of a drinker, and was always abusing people who had more than himself."

"So that's the kind of man he was?"

"He was not that way when he married my mother some years ago. He used to work steadily at the carpenter business, and appeared to be contented. He got into trouble with the rich man of the village, the owner of the Fairview Bank, about an outhouse he put up for him, and after that his luck changed for the worse, though in my opinion he brought his misfortunes on himself, except, of course, the death of my mother. He couldn't help that. It proved the last straw with him. He went down hill quick after that."

"I suppose he's living on the insurance money from the house now?"

"No. He hadn't received it up to the time he——"

Fred stopped abruptly.

The skipper saw the boy was hiding something from him.

He did not press the matter, and there was silence between them for several minutes.

Then the skipper told Fred to go into the cabin and set the table.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE BURGLARY.

When the meal was on the table, Markley called Fred into the cockpit.



"Look here, young man, do you think you can steer this vessel while Wambold and I are eating?"

"I'll try, but I have never steered a vessel in my life," replied the boy.

"You might as well learn now if you're going to stay with the sloop, for you'll have to stand your turn at the wheel when called on to do so. As the wind is light, you ought to be able to get along until Wambold gives you a lesson or two. Come around where I am. Now grab the spokes so. Hold the wheel steady as she is, then the sloop will sail herself."

Fred understood, and Markley stepped aside.

After watching him for a few minutes, and seeing that he was doing all right, the owner went to his breakfast.

Steering a vessel was a new occupation for Fred, and, naturally, he felt a bit nervous, but having been told to hold the wheel steady in a certain way, he put his attention down to it and got along famously.

He soon acquired confidence and discovered that, under the present conditions, it was not so very hard to keep the sloop on her course.

The men ate their breakfast leisurely, then they came into the cockpit and the skipper relieved Fred, telling him to get his own breakfast, then clear off the table and wash the dishes.

An hour later Fred came up through the galley scuttle ready for the next thing on the programme.

He was called to the wheel, and the men retired to the cabin and shut the door.

They remained inside the best part of an hour, and then reappeared.

Wambold went to the wheel and began giving Fred some general instructions in the art of steering, while Markley paced the cabin roof with a cigar in his mouth.

When noon came around the skipper told Fred to get dinner himself, indicating that the bill of fare would be cold roast beef, sliced, boiled potatoes and pie.

The only things the boy had to cook were the potatoes and a pot of coffee.

He laid the table, and had the meal on the table at half-past twelve.

He went to the wheel as before, and stood there till the men were through.

When he came on deck later he found the sloop near the north shore of Long Island, heading for a break in a short line of cliffs, against the foot of which the water broke with little force.

Under the handling of the skipper the vessel ran into a narrow passage that ended in a small basin out of sight of the Sound.

Fred thought this a strange place for the Pelican to come to anchor when conditions were favorable for her to continue on her course to Port Jefferson, where she was bound.

Then he recollected that Markley had expressed an intention of visiting friends along the shore, so he guessed that was why he had interrupted his trip.

Being the owner, no one could question his right to do as he pleased.

The sails were lowered, but not clewed up; neither was the anchor dropped.

Fred was called on to help Wambold run a mooring line to a big boulder on the narrow beach of the cove.

This indicated to the boy that their stay would be brief.

He expected that Markley would go right ashore, climb the rugged path to the top of the cliff, and return in an hour or so. Nothing like that happened.

Markley and Wambold merely stepped on to the beach, seated themselves on a flat stone, and stayed there talking together and looking over a paper the former had in his hand.

Fred had nothing to do but lay about on deck, and as there was nothing particularly interesting about the rocks and the gurgling water of the basin, he soon got tired, and lying over on his back, with his gaze on the clear blue sky, he began to think about his past life at Fairview.

The afternoon slipped away, and five o'clock came.

Wambold called to Fred to get supper, telling him to fry a mess of bacon and eggs, and make coffee.

Fred obeyed orders.

"So far I'm earning my dollar and a half a day pretty easy," he thought, as he went about his culinary duties. "I suppose when we reach Port Jefferson I'll have to help unload the cargo, but that oughtn't to take long, for the sloop does not appear to be heavily loaded. Take it altogether, I should say this job is something of a cinch. Still it may not be so easy later."

Supper was over before dark, and still Markley made no move to leave the cove.

While Fred was eating and cleaning up, he and the skipper went ashore and smoked on the beach.

The tide was low now and there was barely water enough in the pool to float the sloop's keel, but as enough is as good as a feast, it didn't matter.

Wambold came on board after darkness fell, and told Fred that he could turn in whenever he got ready, as the sloop would remain in the basin several hours.

Fred remained on deck till nine, rather puzzled to account for things, and then went to bed.

An hour later Markley passed through the side passage from the cabin to the galley and looked at him.

Finding him sound asleep he returned, locking the door of the galley.

With a large bag apiece under their arms they went ashore, climbed the path and disappeared.

Both bags had something in them.

It was about two in the morning when they reappeared on the top of the cliff.

The bags were swollen out to their full capacity, and appeared to be heavy.

They descended the path carefully and regained the sloop.

The skipper then cast off the mooring line, and both men taking poles, pushed the Pelican out through the passage into the Sound.

The sails were hoisted and the sloop was headed out into the big strait.

The bags were carried into the cabin, the door shut on Markley inside, and the skipper attended to the steering.

For more than an hour the owner remained closeted by himself.

A light shone through the skylight, and frequently a clinking sound reached Wambold's ears.

Then the cabin door was opened and Markley stepped outside.

He took the wheel and the skipper stepped into the cabin and went to bed.

The owner remained at his post till sunrise, during which time he had sailed the vessel across the Sound and into a secluded spot on the Connecticut shore.

Fred was surprised to find that the Pelican had changed her anchorage during the night to a place as unfrequented as the cove.

As he saw the Sound lying on the right he had no difficulty in understanding that they were now moored on the south shore of Connecticut.

This was a strange way of sailing to Port Jefferson, he thought, but then it was none of his business how the sloop reached her destination.

While he was cooking breakfast he heard a sound of hammering in the cabin.

When he went in there to lay the table he saw three boxes standing in a corner, partially concealed by a blanket.

After breakfast the sloop, favored by a good wind, sailed along the Connecticut shore to a small town on the Sound.

Here the Pelican put in at one of the wharves.

Markley went away and returned after a time with an expressman.

The boxes were loaded on the vehicle, Markley got on the seat with the driver, and off the wagon went.

In the course of time he got back, then the sloop left her moorings and started diagonally across the Sound toward Long Island.

They reached Port Jefferson that afternoon, landed a consignment of groceries and some other things, and lay at the little wharf all night waiting for a load of eggs and produce that was to be carried to New York.

Markley brought the local newspaper aboard and handed it to Wambold, pointing out some article for his inspection.

After supper both men went ashore.

Fred found the paper lying on the cabin floor and picked it up.

He read it while eating his supper.

The principal story told about a robbery which had been pulled off at the home of a wealthy resident along the north shore the night before.

A valuable set of silver plate, and many choice articles in gold and silver had been stolen.

In the opinion of the village constable, who was called to the house, the job was the work of experts.

They left no clew behind them as to their line of retreat, and the country was being scoured in an effort to catch them.

The plunder being large, the impression prevailed that they had come from Brooklyn or New York in an automobile, and had departed the way they came.



A complete list of the stolen articles were printed.

The plate bore the monogram of the owner, "M. L.," while the silver spoons were stamped with an "L," under the device of two clasped hands.

The robbery was committed some time between the hours of midnight and three in the morning.

Footprints of two different sizes of boots were found under the pantry window where the burglars had effected their entrance.

The heel mark of one of the boots showed the impression of four large headed nails in the form of a cross.

Fred was much interested in the story, and he guessed this was the article the owner had called the skipper's attention to.

After reading one or two other things the boy started to clean up.

The men had not returned by the time he had finished, so he returned to the cabin, lighted the lamp and picked up the paper again.

Then it was he noticed something bright in one corner—partly hidden behind a pair of shoes which had been carelessly thrown there.

He went over and picked it up.

It was a silver spoon.

Examining it he gave a gasp when he saw the letter L under a small design of two clasped hands.

He could hardly believe his eyes.

He carried it to the table and consulted the story of the robbery again to make sure it was what was mentioned in print.

He saw that it was.

"My gracious! how could that spoon, identical in appearance with the stolen ones, have got in this cabin?" he cried.

Then his thoughts went back to the cove where the sloop had lingered so long without any apparent purpose, and an uneasy suspicion began to take hold of his mind.

She was still at rest there when he went to sleep around nine o'clock, but in the morning she had moved across to another lonely spot on the Connecticut shore.

Then he recollected the boxes which he had seen that morning for the first time in the cabin, and which had been taken to a town further along and carried off by an express wagon.

What was in them, and where were they carried to?

While Fred was considering these disquieting things his eyes lighted again on the shoes in the corner.

A sudden thought occurred to him and he walked over, picked them up and looked at the bottom of the heels.

Four large, brass-headed nails in the form of a cross stood out on one.

There were none on the other.

A piece of the heel of the first shoe had come off, and the brass nails were employed to repair it.

Fred nearly had a fit at this convincing piece of evidence that appeared to connect either Markley or Wambold with the burglary.

In fact both of them must be guilty.

As he dropped the shoe on the floor he heard the voices of men on the wharf approaching.

In a state of nervous trepidation he picked up the spoon and thrust it into his pocket, sat down at the table and, turning to the inside pages of the paper, appeared to be deeply interested in the local news of the village.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SILVER SPOON.

The men stepped aboard, and Markley looked into the cabin. He saw Fred reading the newspaper.

"Taking things easy, eh, Fisher?" he said, in a bantering tone.

"I'll go forward if I'm intruding here. I forgot that I was told not to hang around this end of the sloop," said Fred, rising and dropping the paper.

"There's no harm done, young man, but as you are the crew, your place is forward. You can take the paper with you and light the lamp in the galley."

"I've read about all that's in the paper. Anything I can do for you, sir?"

"Nothing."

Markley turned away and Fred walked through the passage to the cook room and climbed to his customary roosting spot on deck.

He was glad to have the chance to think over what he had discovered.

His dream of a continuous snap at \$10 a week was looking shaky.

His discovery of the silver spoon and the shoe with the incriminating nails on the heel, fitting in exactly with those points in the newspaper story, made things look black for the men he was sailing with.

That Markley should be a professional crook did not astonish him half as much as that Wambold should be his confederate.

He had taken a strong liking to the skipper, and it was a great shock to him to find that the man was unworthy of the estimation he had formed of him.

It is true the only evidence he had to connect the men with the robbery was the spoon and the nails on the heel of the shoe.

But that evidence seemed to be conclusive.

Then there was the side features of the case—the putting in of the sloop at the lonesome cove and the landing, and spiriting away of the three boxes at the Connecticut town.

He could not but believe that the boxes contained the stolen plate and other articles, and he felt certain they had been shipped by express to be claimed when the sloop returned to the city.

After he had gone carefully over the matter as it appeared to him, he asked himself what he should do in the premises.

Clearly, as an honest boy, his duty pointed one way—he ought to give the information he possessed to the authorities.

The spoon he had in his pocket, but if he took possession of the telltale shoe it might be missed, and the two men, taking alarm at his absence from the sloop, would sail away and seek some hiding place.

But if he did hand the spoon and the shoe over to the Port Jefferson police, with his statement of the case, would that fasten the crime on Markley and the skipper?

If they were arrested they would deny everything, and how could he prove he had found the articles aboard of the sloop?

Besides, he was connected with the Pelican himself, and would he not be regarded also with suspicion?

The case presented many difficulties, and after pondering over it for an hour he was still uncertain how to act.

Finally he went to bed to sleep on it.

He was routed out at sunrise by Wambold.

"Our return freight is on the dock, and we must get it aboard before breakfast," said the skipper.

Fred got up, and ten minutes later was hard at work helping Wambold load the crates of eggs and boxes of farm produce.

When everything was below and the hatch on, sail was hoisted, the mooring lines cast off, and the sloop glided down the bay, which they had to navigate before reaching the Sound.

The wind was fairly strong, and Wambold took the wheel.

Fred was directed to get breakfast.

When he entered the cabin to set the table he found Markley just turning out of his bunk.

The Pelican was still inside the big bay, and as a long and short leg had to be followed to make the Sound, Fred could not be trusted at the wheel.

So Markley ate alone that morning, and when he was done he relieved the skipper.

By this time Fred was satisfied that Markley was the real captain, and that Wambold was merely his general assistant.

Markley showed that he could work the sloop as well as Wambold, perhaps better.

Summing up several little incidents that had come under his notice, Fred was more than half convinced that Wambold was under the owner's thumb.

Wambold's gloomy deportment suggested that he was not in real sympathy with the crooked part of the business, and was acting under compulsion.

Fred was more than willing to find excuses to account for the skipper acting in concert with Markley in a criminal way.

The one objection he had to exposing the men was the effect it was bound to have on Wambold.

The authorities would not absolve him from his criminal acts because he engaged in them against his will.

Indeed it would be hard to persuade the police that the skipper was not as much in the game as Markley himself.

After Wambold ate his breakfast Fred went to his, and by the time he had everything cleaned up, the sloop was out in the Sound, bowling along under a stiff breeze that raised the foam about her cutwater.

One thing Fred had fully decided on—he would not sail on another trip aboard the Pelican.

He would try to collect his money and quit.

If Markley refused to pay him he would quit anyway.

The men were playing a dangerous game, and sooner or



later the police would trace things to the sloop; and were he (Fred) to remain aboard he would be open to arrest himself, and the chances were he'd suffer with the men.

Fred also believed it was his duty to give the New York police a hint about the three boxes, which he could do by letter, anonymously.

He was convinced they contained the plunder and had been expressed to the city to be called for.

All day long the Pelican made fast time on her return trip. Fred steered a good part of the time, at first under Wambold's eye, and then entirely by himself.

The skipper also put him wise to the uses of the different sheets.

Thus the boy acquired considerable knowledge of boatmanship, though he did not expect it ever would be of any use to him.

During the morning he heard a tapping sound in the cabin, as if some one was hammering on the heel of a shoe, or something similar.

When he laid the table for dinner he saw four large brass-headed nails lying on a small shelf.

He knew they had been removed from the shoe he had seen them attached to, and some other kind of nails substituted.

Whether the tell-tale shoe belonged to Markley or Wambold he did not know, but as the former was the much better dressed and genteel of the two, he judged that the shoe was worn by the skipper.

Later he found the brass nails had disappeared, so he supposed they had been thrown overboard.

It was close to five when the sloop left the Sound and entered the East River.

Here the wind began to fail them, and in course of half an hour they were barely making headway.

This fact did not seem to worry Markley any.

His freight was not to be landed till daylight at one of the Harlem wharves, so they had lots of time to make their destination.

Fred got supper as usual, and it was dark when he started to clear away.

Markley was in the cabin at the time, figuring on a sheet of paper at the end of the table.

Something rattled on the floor close to Fred's feet.

Markley looked down and saw a bright object.

He picked it up, looked at it and uttered an oath.

It was the silver stamped "L" under the clasped hands, and had slipped through a hole in the boy's pocket.

## CHAPTER IX.

### FACING DEATH.

"Look here, young man, where did you get this spoon?" demanded Markley, with a black look.

Fred looked at it and changed color, a circumstance which the man did not fail to observe.

"Me?" said the boy, in a hesitating way, for he was not a little confused by the unexpected circumstance.

"I said you, didn't I?" cried Markley.

Some boys would have denied all knowledge of the spoon, but Fred had been brought up to tell the truth without evasion.

Had he tried to tell a lie he would have showed it on his face.

"I found it, sir," he replied.

"Where?"

"In yonder corner, where the shoes are."

"Why didn't you hand it over to me?"

Fred remained silent.

"Wanted to keep it, I suppose, because you saw it was silver, eh?"

"I put it in my pocket."

"And it just fell out. You were reading the Port Jefferson News last evening—the paper I fetched aboard. Did you see anything in that about spoons?"

"About spoons, sir?"

"That's what I said. The most important story on the first page was the account of a robbery which happened the night before on the north shore of the island. Did you read it?"

"Yes," admitted Fred.

"All of it?"

"Yes."

"Then you saw the list of the stolen articles, which were fully described?"

"Yes."

"When you found the spoon you examined it, didn't you?"

"I looked at it."

"Of course you did. Did the stamp on it attract your particular attention?"

"I noticed it."

"Did it suggest anything to you—a suspicion, for instance?"

"About what, sir?"

"You are prevaricating. I can see it in your countenance. It occurred to you that the spoon fitted the description of a set of the stolen spoons. Come now, own up."

"I admit that——"

"Of course you do. You said to yourself that it was funny such a spoon should be aboard of the sloop on the morning following the robbery. I am right, ain't I?"

Markley would have made an admirable judge of an inquisition.

His tones were calm, his manner cool, and his words direct to the point.

He was putting Fred through what is known in police circles as the Third Degree.

His sharp, black eyes never left the boy's face, and he seemed able to read the lad's very thoughts.

Fred shifted his feet uneasily, and he looked like one who was undergoing an ordeal he would have evaded if he could.

"I am right, ain't I?" repeated Markley.

"Yes," blurted out Fred.

"You also recollected that we put in at a secluded cove and remained there until after you went to bed. That fact aroused your suspicions, didn't it?"

"I thought it odd, but I supposed you went there in order to visit some friend you knew in the vicinity."

"That was the way you figured it out?"

"Yes."

"Before you found the spoon, you mean; but after you found it and saw that it fitted the description of a part of the stolen articles, you had a different opinion. Isn't that so?"

"I don't know," said Fred, uneasily.

"You do know. Your face says so, so why attempt to deny it?"

"Why are you asking me so many questions?"

"To amuse myself and learn your object in hiding that spoon. I suppose the fact also occurred to you that we put three boxes ashore that morning, and you wondered what they contained."

"I judged they were freight you brought from the city to land there."

"That was your opinion before you found the spoon; but after you found it you had other thoughts on the subject. You thought maybe the rest of the spoons, the silver plate and the other stolen articles were in the boxes, and that they were landed to get them out of the sloop. That's what you thought, isn't it?"

Fred was staggered at the way the owner talked.

Markley's words were almost admissions of the truth.

What was he trying to get at?

Was he leading up to a deal he wanted to make to ensure his own safety and that of his companion?

"Why should I have thought that?" replied Fred. "I didn't see or know what was in the boxes. Besides, you did not commit burglary, did you? Why should you? You are the owner of this sloop, and your business is to carry freight to and from New York in inland waters. The paper said the burglary had been committed by expert crooks, who had probably used an automobile to reach the house, and afterward to carry their plunder away in."

A sardonic smile wreathed Markley's mouth.

It was clear he believed the boy was sparring to gain some advantage and to deceive him by plausible reasoning.

"All right, young man, have it your way," he said, getting up and putting the paper in his pocket. "It struck me that you might have suspected Wambold and me as having had a hand in the burglary, and that when you got back to the city you intended to notify the police of your suspicions. You mustn't overlook the fact that your own presence aboard the sloop would have a compromising effect on yourself—that is, if the crime in question was traced to us. In that case, it wouldn't be safe for you to peach. In a big city like New York, where crooks stand in with one another for the common good, an informer stands a poor chance of escaping with his life."

With that significant remark Markley walked out into the cockpit to confer with Wambold, and Fred walked slowly through the passage to the galley.

It took the boy longer than usual to clean up.

His thoughts dwelt upon the interview between himself and Markley.

He no longer had the slightest doubt that the owner of the



sloop and his companion, Wambold, were the burglars who robbed the house.

Markley wouldn't have talked to him the way he did if he had nothing to do with the crime.

He realized that the man had pumped him far enough to learn that he (Fred) had his suspicions of the truth.

His final words veiled a threat about what would happen to him if he went to the police and told what he knew.

That Markley was a dangerous man Fred was sure.

The manner in which the man questioned him gave the boy an inkling of his character.

Fred believed that Markley was a man who would not hesitate to commit a murder, coldly and deliberately, if he found such a crime necessary to his safety.

The boy was giving the last touches to the galley when he noticed a saucer standing on a shelf near the stove.

Under the impression that it had no business there, he took it down, and then he saw that it held the four large-headed brass tacks that had been in the shoe.

He looked at them reflectively.

Having lost the spoon, it struck him that he ought to take possession of the tacks.

Picking up a small match-box, he dumped out the lucifers, dropped the tacks in it and put it in his pocket.

He wasn't aware that a pair of sharp eyes were watching his every movement.

Markley had crept upon him through the passage and stood at the door watching him.

He saw enough to convince him that Fred was dangerous to his interests.

He drew a revolver, cocked it and, stepping forward, shoved it against the boy's head.

"What did you put in your pocket just now?" he asked, with glittering eyes.

Fred started back in alarm.

"A match-box," he said, uneasily.

"So I saw, but what was in the match-box?"

"What should be in a match-box?" asked Fred, evasively.

"Matches," said Markley; "but I saw you dumped the matches out. What did you put in place of them?"

"I decline to answer," said Fred, desperately, feeling that he was being driven into a corner.

"Shall I tell you? You put four large-headed brass nails. What do you intend to do with them?"

"Keep them."

"As evidence for the police?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do you think I don't know what your scheme is? You have seen the shoe mentioned in the Port Jefferson News. Now you have found the brass nails. You intend to tell your story to the police and offer the nails in corroboration, explaining where the shoe itself can be found. That's your plan, but you'll never carry it out, young man. I made a mistake in taking you with us. You are shrewder than you look. The country doesn't often send such clever boys as you to the city. It is unfortunate for you that you met us, and a bit embarrassing to us, but there is only one way to deal with you, and that is to put you out of the way for good."

"No, no, Markley, don't harm the boy," cried the voice of the skipper at this juncture. "We have enough on our souls without that."

The speaker had come upon them unobserved through the passage.

"Don't you interfere, Wambold. Get back to your post. Remember, one word from me would send you up the river."

"I know it. I know it," said the skipper, in a hollow tone. "You have held that threat over my head for months; but I had rather go up the river than see that boy meet his death at your hands."

"Will you go aft?" hissed Markley.

"Not till I am assured of the boy's safety."

"Confound you!" cried the owner, half turning from Fred to strike the skipper.

Then the boy saw his chance.

He shoved the revolver aside, smashed Markley in the jaw, sprang through the scuttle on to the deck, and jumped into the dark, flowing river.

The crook was after him as quick as a wink, and scanned the surface of the river all about the spot where the boy disappeared, but saw no sign of him.

"He's gone," he muttered. "We're in the middle of the river, and he never could reach the shore. Good! He saved me the trouble of silencing him."

Then Markley walked aft.

## CHAPTER X.

## STARTING BUSINESS WITH A DOLLAR.

As Markley turned away, satisfied the boy's fate was settled, and the sloop swept slowly on down the river, Fred was not far away.

He had swam under the boat, for he was a regular water rat, come up on the other side, slipped down to the stern, and seized the rudder rope and hung on with only his head above the water.

The water was cold at that season, but Fred was afraid to strike out for the shore, for he wasn't sure how far he would have to swim to reach it.

He could hear Markley and Wambold talking within a yard of him.

The former was exulting over the boy's presumed death, while the skipper was bewailing his fate.

"He was a bright lad and I liked him," said Wambold. "I didn't want him to join us. He was not one of us, and I felt that only trouble would come of it."

"Bah! You're as soft as an old woman," sneered the crook.

"I wish I was dead."

"And then you'd be free of me, eh?" chuckled the owner.

"Why don't you jump overboard and join the boy? Now is as good a chance as any. I won't stop you."

The skipper was silent.

"You haven't the courage," laughed Markley. "If you had any sand you'd try to cut loose from me, for the business we're in is not to your taste. Do you think that if I were in your shoes I'd stand for what you do? Not for a minute. I'd fight the case to a finish, and if I had to go up the river I'd go and have it over with. Then when I got out I'd—well, no matter what I'd do. It wouldn't do you any good to know. I'm going to turn in now. When you make the wharf, run alongside and make fast. Then turn in yourself."

The speaker entered the cabin and partly shut the door.

Five minutes later Fred reached up, grabbed the stern of the sloop, and with the agility of a monkey clambered aboard and tapped Wambold on the arm.

"Fisher!" cried the startled man. "Is that you or your ghost?"

"It's me, all right. I've been hanging on to the rudder, but I'm too chilled to stand it any longer. Believing you're my friend, I took a chance and came aboard," replied Fred.

"Go forward—quick! If he should see you he'd shoot you, though he thinks you are at the bottom of the river. I'll head shoreward and give you a chance to get away. You can swim a bit or else you would not be here now. Go—go!"

Fred sprang on the roof of the cabin and went forward to the bows, taking the precaution to close the galley scuttle on the way.

In fifteen minutes the sloop was close in to a solitary coal wharf on the Bronx shore.

"Good-by!" he called out to Wambold.

Then he went down over the bows and struck out for the wharf.

He easily reached it, and saw the sloop gliding away into the darkness.

There was an old outbuilding near the wharf, and Fred looked into it to see if he could shelter himself there till morning.

It was quite bare inside, with cracks through which the keen night breeze blew.

A ladder stood in a corner communicating with the loft above.

Fred went up to see what the prospects were there.

He found a big bunch of straw in it at one end.

He could roll himself in that nicely and keep fairly warm even without a stitch on him.

So he removed his garments, wrung them out and hung them on nails to dry; then he turned into the straw.

He slept till long after sunrise.

When he awoke he found he had a companion, a trampish-looking lad a year younger than himself.

"Hello, skeezicks, where did you shoot from?" said the youth. "What are you doing with all your clothes off and hung around the wall? Did you fall in the river?"

"You've guessed it," replied Fred, who did not care to confide the real facts to the young stranger.

"No home, eh? Out on the world like myself?"

"Correct," said Fred, feeling his clothes and finding they were still damp.

"Slap 'em out in the sun," said the lad. "No one will see you 'round here."



Fred put on his shoes and carried the rest of his clothes downstairs and hung them on a fence.

There was no one on the coal dock, nor was there a soul in sight except on a schooner going down the river.

"I suppose you're broke like myself?" said the youth, who had followed him out of the building.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Fred, for the first time recollecting that all his worldly possessions, including his money, was in the grip he had abandoned aboard the sloop.

"What's the matter?"

"I've just recollected that I've lost the little money and the few things I brought with me from the country."

"Are you from the country?"

"Yes—Connecticut."

"Came to the city to make your fortune?" grinned the youth.

"Yes."

"And you've begun by losing everything you had. If you had only saved a dollar we could start in business."

"Start in business with a dollar?" cried Fred, in surprise.

"Yep."

"What kind of business?"

"Peddling kindling wood."

"Your plan would be to buy a dollar's worth of wood at wholesale rates and sell it at retail?"

"No."

"How then?"

"We'd need a push-cart and two or three barrels to put the wood in. The rent of the cart and the barrels would be half a dollar, and as I know the man, he'd only ask half a dollar as security for the outfit. See?"

"Yes; but that would leave no money to buy the wood."

"We wouldn't buy it. There is plenty of wood in vacant lots near new buildings. All we'd need would be a hatchet to chop it into right lengths. We could easily fill four barrels, taking care not to put too much in, and sell the stuff for 25 cents a barrelful. We ought to be able to sell twelve barrelfuls in a day. That would give us \$1.25 each profit."

"That wouldn't be so bad," said Fred, rather attracted by the proposition.

"Of course it wouldn't; but we can't do a thing without the dollar to start."

Then it was that Fred recollected that he had a dollar and a half in his vest pocket.

He told his new acquaintance, and the youth gave a shout of satisfaction.

"We'll have breakfast first and then start in on the job," he said. "It's worth the price of my feed to put you on to all the wrinkles of the business."

Fred admitted it was.

By this time his clothes were nearly dry, so he put them on, and the strangely met pair started off together to find a cheap restaurant.

The boy said the nearest hash house was about a mile from that lonely spot.

"You haven't told me your name," said Fred.

"Billy Decker."

"Mine is Fred Fisher."

"Fisher & Decker, dealers in kindling wood," grinned Billy. "Fisher puts up the capital, Decker the experience."

"The Fisher & Decker Co., Limited, would be better, for the capital is limited to one dollar," laughed Fred.

In due time Billy landed Fred in a small coffee house, where one could get a piece of cheap steak for 15 cents if his finances permitted that extravagance.

As both boys were hungry, Fred ordered steak, coffee and rolls for both, which would cost the whole of his half dollar, and when the food was set before them they made short work of everything in sight.

"Gee! I feel better now," said Billy. "We won't have to eat again till night, and we ought to be able to put in some good licks at our business."

"I hope so," replied Fred. "If the kindling wood idea doesn't pan out, we'll go flat broke right away."

"It'll pan out, don't you worry," said Billy, confidently.

"You ought to know, for you've been at it; but how is it you didn't make a success of it when you had a start?"

"The partner I had skinned me. He was older than you, but he was a lush. As soon as we made a stake he quit work and drank up all the profits. I tried to work without him, but it takes two to make the business go right."

Billy took Fred around to a man who had push-carts to rent to hucksters and others who wanted the use of such article by the day.

He charged one dollar deposit for the wagon if he knew his

customer, otherwise a stranger, or a chap whose reputation was unreliable, had to put up the full value of the cart.

When the cart was returned he handed back the money, less fifty cents, for the use of the cart.

Billy told him that he and his friend wanted a cart that day to carry kindling wood around for sale.

The man said he could have one if he put up the usual dollar.

"I want you to lend us four barrels to hold the wood," said Billy.

"That will cost you a quarter extra. I'll take it out of the dollar when you come back," said the man.

"Oh, I say, have a heart, Mulvaney. One dollar is all the capital we have. Give us a chance to make something, won't you?"

"I'm giving you a chance, ain't I? I'm lending you the barrels."

"They ain't worth more than ten cents each, and we shall want them right along. Don't be a Shylock. Make it a nickel."

"I'll make them a nickel each," said the man, who was out for all he could get.

"After we have them twice they'll belong to us, then?"

"Not much. I'm renting 'em, not selling 'em."

"But look what you'll make," protested Billy.

"What am I in business for? You don't have to take them. You can rent the cart alone for fifty cents a day and find your own barrels."

That was the best they could do with Mr. Mulvaney, so they took the four barrels and the cart, and the man, as a particular favor, loaned Billy an old hatchet that was hardly worth taking away.

Pushing the cart before them, Billy and Fred started out to find wood that could be converted into kindling size, and so fill the four barrels which they expected to sell among the tenements for a quarter each.

## CHAPTER XI.

FROM \$1 TO \$100.

As luck would have it, they soon struck a vacant lot where building operations had begun, and had progressed only as far as the erection of the first story on two out of four buildings.

The other two buildings had only the first floor beams laid across the foundations.

The cellars of the more advanced structures, which probably had come to a stop owing to trouble the builder had in raising a loan to proceed, were littered with small pieces of wood that had fallen through.

No one was around to interfere with the operations of the boys.

The cart was pushed into the lot and left at the back of the open cellar windows.

"This is a regular cinch," said Billy, enthusiastically.

"But if we're seen taking the wood we'll be arrested, won't we?" said Fred, in a doubtful tone.

"Naw. We might be chased if a cop sees us, but it's only a chance. Come on and get busy. We ain't got no time to waste."

Fred began breaking up the larger pieces, while Billy rushed the available small pieces outside and dumped them into a barrel.

In half an hour the four barrels were filled, Billy arranging their contents so that they looked fuller than they really were.

He was up to snuff in the business, and you couldn't get the better of him.

"Now we'll start out and sell the wood," he said.

"Does it sell easy?"

"Sure it does. I could find a customer for 100 barrelfuls if we had them."

The wood was quickly sold in the first block they struck, and several people who could not be supplied then wanted some.

"We'll bring it to you bimeby, ma'am," said Billy to one, and the others were told the same.

Back they went to the same buildings for a fresh supply.

They made five trips that day, taking in \$5, and cleaning out all the wood in the cellars of the buildings and on the outside, leaving them as bare of the stuff as though a cyclone had swept them clean.

"Now we'll go back and turn in the cart and the barrels and get thirty cents back out of our dollar. Then we'll have \$5.30."

"We have done well to-day," said Fred.

"Sure we have, but we were lucky in finding a lot of good wood. We won't do so well every day. Still, we can make a living, and that's better than loafing around on your uppers."



They turned in their outfit, Billy telling Mulvaney that they would call for it again in the morning.

"How did you make out?" asked the man.

"Oh, we made our grub and a little over," replied Billy.

They patronized the same coffee house, and as they were very hungry after their day's work, their feed cost them a quarter apiece again.

That left the partners with \$4.80, out of which their breakfast had to come.

"Where do we sleep to-night?" asked Fred.

"We'll go over to the house where we slept last night. That's the cheapest joint I know of. Plenty of straw and nothing to pay."

On the way over to the Bronx shore Fred told Billy all about his experience aboard the sloop, and how that accounted for his being in the unoccupied house the night before with his wet clothes hanging around on the walls.

"Gee! So those chaps are water crooks, and they robbed a house on Long Island? Sailing up and down the Sound is only a cover for their game. Why don't you get back at them by tipping the police off to the business? The sloop would be pulled and you'd get your grip and your money back."

"I guess Markley has opened my bag by this time and taken the money. I suppose it's my duty to notify the police, but they might arrest me as an accessory."

"That's so. Don't do it. If you were pinched, up would go our wood business, and I'd be down on my luck."

"I might send an unsigned note to the police by mail, but I don't know where the sloop was to dock. It was somewhere on the Harlem River."

"You know the name of the sloop and the men's names. Tell that to the cops, and they'll do the rest."

"But I wouldn't like to get the skipper in trouble. He's not a bad fellow. Markley has him under his thumb. That's why he's in the business."

"Then don't do anything, though if I was in your shoes I'd want to get even with the main guy for trying to kill me," said Billy.

By that time they had reached the house, and being tired, they turned in right away and were soon sleeping as soundly as if they lay on beds of down.

Next day they did not do near so well as the first day, for they had to look around from place to place for old wood, and many pieces they ran across were too big to be broken up by a small, dull hatchet.

They sold only six barrells, and as their expenses amounted to the same amount, for they confined themselves to twenty-cent meals on account of their poor success, they came out just even.

The third day they did better, clearing sixty cents over all.

The next day was Sunday, and they could do no business, but they put in the day looking up places where there was stray wood, and gathering it up in piles.

Their food reduced their capital to \$4.40.

Monday they started out early, and soon filled four barrels from the piles.

This was quickly disposed of, and they started out to find more.

A good-natured watchman in charge of two buildings where work was temporarily suspended assisted them to four barrels more.

They sold \$4 worth of wood that day.

As Mulvaney graciously charged them only ten cents for the use of the four barrels now, they cleared \$2.40 over everything.

Naturally, they moved to different localities each day, and the next five days netted them a profit of about \$7, and that hoisted their capital to \$15.

Billy was delighted over what he called their success, but Fred was not so enthusiastic.

A ten days' trial convinced him that while this kind of business might be all right for Billy, there wasn't enough in it to encourage him to keep at it.

Still he didn't want to shake his new friend, for Billy was a good chap in his way, and they had become warm friends.

Fred remembered he had not written to Dick Harvey's father, giving him his New York address, as he had promised, and was bound to do, since Farmer Harvey had made himself responsible for Fred's appearance as a witness in the mail robbers' case when the Government was ready to bring the men to trial.

Of course, as things were, he had no address where a letter would reach him.

He told Billy about the matter, and his friend told him to have his correspondence addressed care of Mr. Mulvaney.

Fred didn't care particularly to do that, but as he saw no

other way, he wrote a letter to Dick, telling him that he had been up against hard luck since reaching the city, and that having lost the money he had brought with him, he had no regular lodgings, but was knocking around from pillar to post, as the saying is, trying to better himself.

In conclusion he said that for the present he could be addressed care of Mr. Mulvaney, and when he got another address he would let Dick know.

Fred continued his partnership with Billy on the following week, and they met with a streak of luck.

Their profits only panned out \$5 over all expenses, but Billy found a small wallet with a \$10 bill in it, and that made them worth \$30.

"Don't you think we can branch out in something more legitimate and profitable, Billy?" said Fred, on Sunday. "We have got \$30 in the treasury."

"There's a man down on Blank street near the river who sends out hucksters with a horse and wagon and a load of cheap fruit, potatoes, and such things. I guess if we put up the \$30 he'd take a chance on us. He supplies the license. We might do well at that around among the tenements."

"Do you think it will pay us?" said Fred.

"We ought to make a living and something more," replied Billy.

Fred decided to take a shy at the huckster business, and next morning they called on the man and had a talk with him.

"How much money have you got?" said the man. "I don't know you chaps, and I must have some security."

"We can put up \$25," said Fred.

"I can send you out right away with a load of cheap oranges. The season is over for that fruit, but I occasionally pick up a lot of inferior stuff. I'll charge you ten cents a dozen for all you sell. What you don't sell I'll take back."

"What will we charge for them?"

"Twenty-five cents a dozen, and when you can't get that you can take less. If you put up \$20 security you can take the rig and twenty boxes of the fruit. There's twelve dozen or more in each box. If you sell half you'll do well."

The man gave them some general instructions to help them, and they started for the nearest flat district.

When they reached the right neighborhood the boys each took a dozen oranges in a flat basket and began calling out their goods in true huckster style.

The horse, being accustomed to the business, walked slowly along without guidance, stopping when shouted at, and going ahead when told.

Fred being a polite, good-looking boy, he took well with the women, many buying from him who would have turned down a common huckster.

Billy did pretty well, for he had a clever and taking way about him.

They spent the whole day till darkness fell, and sold 100 of the 260 dozen, at prices that turned them in \$11 profit.

This was a whole lot better than the kindling wood business, but they couldn't hope to make so much on the average with different kinds of stuff.

It was nine o'clock when they brought the rig and the unsold oranges back to the man.

He settled with them, and told them they had done fine for a first day.

"If you're going out again to-morrow, I'll keep your deposit," he said.

"Yes, we'll go out to-morrow," said Fred.

"Then get here early—not later than eight."

"We done first-class to-day," said Billy, as they started for a restaurant. "If we could make \$11 every day we'd soon get rich."

It took them two days more to sell all the oranges, and there was now \$54 in the treasury, after paying their living expenses, which included beds at a lodging-house, for they were too far from the coal wharf to go there after their day's work was done.

They put in the rest of the week selling vegetables, and cleared \$16 more.

During the next two weeks they were handicapped by three days of rainy and uncertain weather, but they worked like Trojans, and when they settled with the man on the third Saturday night the firm was worth \$100.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PELICAN AGAIN.

In the meanwhile Fred had received an answer from Dick Harvey.

Dick sympathized with his old friend on his poor luck, and gave him all the news about Fairview village.



He could not say when the mail-bag thieves would be tried, but his father thought it would be soon.

He advised Fred to be on the look-out for orders to attend the trial, which would be held either at Hartford or New Haven.

Fred answered Dick's letter at once, and changed his address to the place where he and Billy took out their stuff to sell.

He told Dick what he was engaged at, and said he and his partner were doing pretty well.

Summer was now on, and the huckster business was flourishing.

Fred had heard nothing about Markley, Wambold or the Pelican sloop.

He read the papers carefully to learn if the crooked business had been broken up, but could see nothing about it.

So four more weeks slipped away, and the firm had a capital of \$175.

Then Fred was called to Fairview by Mr. Harvey, and Billy said he would go out alone with the wagon while his partner was away.

Fred received a great welcome in the village when he turned up there on Sunday morning, and put up at the Harvey farm.

Next day he was taken to Hartford with Dick by the farmer, and they both testified at the trial which came on that day.

Hank Davis and his companion were convicted, and each got ten years in a Government penitentiary.

Fred received a reward of \$250 for saving the mail, and the official thanks of the post-office department.

That made him feel rich, and next day he returned to the scene of his huckster business.

With a little bunch of money in his possession he considered the advisability of going into a different kind of business.

He was ambitious to do something better than peddling green goods and cheap fruit, particularly as he knew that this line was at a discount during the winter months.

He talked the matter over with Billy.

"The firm is now worth about \$200, and I'm worth \$250 more," he said. "If we can find something better to do, I'll back the firm with my private capital."

"I don't think we can do better while summer lasts," said Billy.

"Maybe not, but we can keep our eyes open and watch the papers for an opening," said Fred.

Billy said he was willing to tackle anything that suited his companion.

"I don't want you to shake me," he said, "for I wouldn't be worth shucks on my own hook. Besides, I don't want to lose you, anyway. We're good friends, and I've been lucky since we came together."

"Oh, I won't shake you, Billy. I like you first rate, and I guess we can arrange to continue together."

They kept on through the summer, doing well most of the time, and by the middle of September the firm was worth \$250.

They had taken a double room not far from the place where they took the wagon and goods out, and for the past three months lived quite comfortably.

One Sunday Fred and Billy were strolling along the Harlem River when they came upon the Pelican sloop moored at a wharf.

No one appeared to be aboard of her.

Fred called his companion's attention to the craft.

"That's the sloop I took the trip to Port Jefferson on," he said to Billy.

"Gee! Is that so?"

"Yes. It's a question whether Markley and Wambold are running her yet, but I have never heard of their being arrested. If they kept up their crooked business I don't see how they could have escaped detection so long. I'd like to see the skipper, for he is friendly toward me, but I don't care to run against Markley. As he never heard from me since I went overboard that night, I take it that he was satisfied I was drowned. If he learned his mistake he might still feel inclined to get back at me. He has no conscience. He meant to shoot me that night, and I only escaped a bullet by the skin of my teeth, as I have told you."

At that moment a man came walking toward the wharf.

It was Wambold, and Fred recognized him at once.

He walked over and held out his hand.

"Glad to see you again, Mr. Wambold," he said.

The skipper started and looked keenly at the boy.

Fred had changed quite a bit, was taller and more genteel looking than when he first came to New York, and for the moment Wambold didn't know him.

"Fred Fisher, is it really you?" he said, grasping the boy by the hand.

"No doubt about it. Is Markley still running the sloop?"

"He is," replied the skipper, gloomily.

"And are you still doing—"

"Hush, Fisher!" said Wambold, looking uneasily about. "Don't ask me. Whatever is done, remember I am only a pawn in the game. I dare not oppose Markley. He has me in his power, and I must swim or sink with him."

"I understand, but you made the mistake of your life by letting him get the upper hand of you in the first place."

"I know it. I know it," groaned the skipper. "Heaven knows I have suffered for my weakness. I should have refused his terms and taken my medicine."

"Then he had a real hold over you at the beginning?"

"Alas, yes. In an evil hour I yielded to temptation. Markley found it out, and from that moment he became my master."

"You mean you committed a crime of some kind?"

"No, I concealed one, and thereby became accessory after the fact. But don't ask me to go into particulars. Pity the weakness which has made me the slave of as vile a scoundrel as walks on two feet to-day."

"I feel sorry for you, Wambold, and would help you if I could."

"I believe you. You are the only real friend I have in all the world, boy that you are, and I am grateful to you for the kindly feeling and sympathy you feel for me. May you never want for a friend yourself. Indeed, I feel you never will. You deserve the best of luck, and I trust you will always have it. You look prosperous. Are you doing well?"

"Yes, I am getting along first rate. I am in business with my young friend here. We started in on a capital of one dollar, and now we are on our feet. Let me introduce him to you. Here, Billy, this is Captain Wambold. Captain, my friend and partner, Billy Decker."

The two shook hands, and Billy said he was glad to know the skipper.

"Where is Markley?" said Fred.

"He's downtown visiting some of his friends."

"Well, I don't want to meet him. You are taking a load on here, I suppose?"

"Yes, for a town on the Connecticut River."

Fred would have asked Wambold some pointed questions but for the presence of his partner; not that it would have made any difference to Billy, for he knew all about the crooked work that Markley and the skipper were engaged in, but because he felt it would embarrass Wambold.

"I suppose Markley took charge of my grip?" said Fred. "The loss of it, with the little money it contained, about \$20, left me stranded when I left the sloop that night."

"No. I took charge of it. It is in my locker, and has never been touched. I shall be glad to restore it to you if you will step aboard," said Wambold.

"Thank you for saving it for me. Its loss amounts to little now, but still I shall be glad to get it back."

The three went aboard, Wambold unlocked the door, and they entered the cabin.

He soon produced the bag, and Fred took it.

After all, the \$20 was not to be sneezed at.

The boys remained about fifteen minutes, and were on the point of leaving when a shadow suddenly darkened the cabin door.

Fred looked up and saw Markley.

The rascal recognized him and started back in surprise.

"You—not dead!" he cried.

"No, Mr. Markley, I am not dead; on the contrary, I am very much alive."

"You swam ashore that night, then?"

"I got ashore all right."

"You must be a wonderful swimmer."

"I can swim some, especially when it is absolutely necessary to pull out."

"Where have you been since?"

"Trying to earn a living."

"And what brings you here now?"

"A mere accident. I saw the sloop at this wharf, and stepped aboard to see if you and Mr. Wambold were still running her."

"And now that you have found out we are, what are you going to do?"

"Take my departure, since my presence can scarcely be considered welcome by yourself after what took place between us before we last parted company."

"I would like to see you a moment on deck."



"All right," said Fred, making a sign to Billy to follow.

Markley walked forward, and Fred followed him.

"Are you going to betray us to the police?" asked the crook, in a low tone.

"I have no evidence against you now, so you're safe as far as I am concerned. Perhaps you wonder I did not act the moment I escaped from the sloop. Well, the reason why I didn't was on Wambold's account. I knew he was acting with you under compulsion, because you had some kind of a hold on him. I liked him, and so, rather than help land him in jail with you, I let the matter slide."

"I see. And the same feeling holds good yet?"

"It does; but nothing would give me greater pleasure than seeing you behind the bars."

Markley grinned.

"You have more sand than Wambold," he said.

"I should hope so. You played on his weakness and hold him in your grip. You couldn't have done that with me."

"Not if I had caught you in a crime?"

"You wouldn't have caught me in one. I am not built that way."

"Well, young man, I guess I made a mistake in trying to fix you. I did not suspect that you had taken such a fancy to Wambold. You can't reach me except through him. We are in the same boat, for he is fully compromised. If we are ever caught, we'll go up the river together. That is all. I won't detain you longer."

And so Fred and Billy left the wharf, and Markley watched them go.

"It's too bad he's on the square," muttered the crook. "He'd make a fine pal to work with if he was built that way. He's got nerve, and he'd take his medicine without a whimper if things went wrong. Better than all, he wouldn't squeal on his friends, no matter what happened. Well, he's soft on Wambold, and so there is no fear of him giving the police the quiet tip. No fear whatever."

Then he turned around and entered the cabin.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### FISHER & DECKER BUY OUT A STORE.

The boy partners continued in the green goods business up into October, by which time their capital amounted to \$300.

Then Fred learned that a man in failing health wanted to sell his stationery and cigar store on Third avenue.

The business was offered at a sacrifice to secure a quick buyer.

As the location was good, and the man's books showed that he was doing very well, Fred talked the matter over with Billy.

They called at the place, looked over the stock, and found there were three living rooms in the back where they could keep house if they wanted to.

The rent was \$45 a month, which the man said was cheap for the locality.

The lease ran only till the first of the next May, and he did not say that he had been tipped off to the fact that the rent would then be raised to \$60.

The man was willing to sell for \$350 cash.

The boys did not know whether the place was worth that, nor did they know anything about the business; but Fred had the store bug in his bonnet, and whatever he wanted suited Billy, who had absolute confidence in his partner's judgment on all things.

Fred talked the man into giving him a forty-eight hours' option for a deposit of \$10, the money to be forfeited if he failed to close the sale.

Leaving Billy to go on with the wagon business, he went downtown to a wholesale stationery house, had a talk with one of the clerks, and offered him \$5 to size up the stock in the store that evening, and let him know if he thought the place was worth the price asked.

The young man met him at an appointed rendezvous and accompanied him to the store.

He went over the stock, quizzed the man closely about the business done in the place, examined his books, and then told Fred when they got outside that the figure asked was fairly cheap.

"If you understood the business, and have some extra capital, I would say that it is a good chance for you to build up a moderate trade into a good one," said the clerk; "but as you don't understand the business, you are taking a risk of making a failure of even a good thing."

"Can't I learn? I can get a catalogue from your house with the wholesale prices, and the man here will put me wise to the retail figures he is asking, which I'll mark down for a guide.

As for the cigar and tobacco department, I can manage the same way. I'll bet I'll have everything down fine inside of a week," replied Fred.

"You can do that, of course, but there is more to learn about running a store successfully than you think. I am telling you this because you have paid me to come here in your interest, and I feel that I ought to put you wise to all the facts that you will have to face. If you have just the purchase price, I advise you not to buy. If you have a few hundred dollars more, you may pull through with luck. It all depends on whether you have the knack to run a store of this kind. Let us walk up a few blocks and see what opposition you have to contend with."

"I have gone over the neighborhood," said Fred. "There is a small store kept by a woman in the next block above. She deals in periodicals and stationery the same as this one, but her stock is much smaller, and apparently not as good. She sells a few brands of cheap cigars, some smoking tobacco, cigarettes and pipes. She also deals in toys and candies."

"I will take a look at the place," said the clerk.

"There is a similar kind of store below which also has a soda fountain. It is small and has a common look. The store I want to buy is the only real first-class place around here, and the people living on the side streets are above the cheap tenement order. I judge they are the people who trade with the man, for he said he had a good class of customers."

After seeing the store above, the clerk said it was not likely to hurt the trade of the store Fred was after.

If the store below was on the same order, it would furnish little real opposition.

"You'll get your papers and periodicals from the big news company downtown near the post-office. You will have to put up a deposit with them to cover the cost of the weekly supply they will send you on your order. You should call there tomorrow and get prices, with a list of the periodicals and papers returnable when not sold during the current week. These will be deducted from your next bill. I have no doubt the clerk who attends to you will furnish you with any points you ask him. The house also sells stationery and cigars. I hope, however, you will buy your stationery from our house. You will find our lines superior and the prices right. I will see that you are treated white, and in addition will help you all I can."

Fred bade the clerk good-night and returned to the store.

Then he told the proprietor that he and his partner were not familiar with the business, but were ready to take a chance on it if the man would coach him in the prices and other secrets of the trade.

This the man promised to do.

"I won't be able to move out my furniture until Monday. If you will come here and put in your time for an hour or two each day this week, I'll give you all the information you need," he said.

Fred said that would suit him first rate, so he paid \$50 down on account, and promised to be on hand on the following afternoon.

When he got back to his room he told Billy he had bought the store.

"Are we going to keep house in the rear?" asked his partner.

"Sure. I'll do the cooking and you can make the bed and sweep out," said Fred.

"It will cost something to buy the things we need."

"Oh, we can get them on the instalment plan. There are three rooms. We will only use two for housekeeping. The other one we'll keep to store things in. We'll buy a small stove, two chairs, a table and some oilcloth for the floor for the kitchen. For the bedroom one iron bed, a cheap dresser, a couple of chairs and a rug will fill the bill. We're not going to put on any style, and we are not likely to have any visitors."

Fred said that after he had been coached in the business he would put Billy next to all the information.

"When I am downtown buying stock you will run the store," he said. "When I am in the store you will help me. I will put you in charge of the cigar stand and the daily papers outside."

Fred went to the store every afternoon and received full instructions about prices and other matters.

"You chaps will live in the back rooms, of course," said the man.

"Yes, in two of them."

"Then you'll have one to spare?"

"Yes, the one just behind the store."

"That being the case, I'll suggest that you would find it to your advantage, I think, to add a phonographic department to the store. I would have done so if I could have made room,



for a good many people in the flats around here own phonographs, and they have to go down to One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street, across the river, or up to One Hundred and Forty-fifth street, to buy new records. You would get their trade if you could afford to put in a stock, and a machine to play them on. The phonograph people would be glad to help you, I dare say, if they believe you can do business in this neighborhood, which I am satisfied you can, for a score of my customers have suggested that I go into that line. It would draw additional custom to the store from people who are now buying elsewhere. Think it over."

Fred said he would, but he did not think the firm had capital enough to engage in any side issue for the present.

The receipts of the store for the four days the man remained there, not counting Sunday, were divided equally between Fred and the ex-owner, after deducting the expenses.

On Monday the man and his wife moved out, and the furniture Fred had ordered was moved in, so that by Monday night he and Billy were fully established in their new venture.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### CONCLUSION.

Fred kept a close account of their first week's receipts, and after allowing for all expenses, he found the firm was in a fair profit.

A newspaper route was attached to the store, but it was only a small one.

Billy looked after it and the newspaper stand outside the door.

This seemed to suit him better than anything else.

Fred saw there would be a good profit made by extending the route, so he started out to canvass for fresh customers.

Naturally, this brought him up against the people who were also running news routes in the neighborhood, none of whom had a store.

One aggressive newsdealer called on the partners one morning and began raising Cain generally.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Fred.

"I won't stand for this business," roared the visitor.

"What business?" asked the young head of the firm.

"Stealing my customers."

"What do you mean by stealing your customers?"

"You're going around and trying to get them away from me. I bought the route I am serving, and you have no right to butt in on my people."

"This is a free country. I am simply canvassing for trade for our newspaper route. If any of your customers want to make a change they have the right to do it. You don't own them."

"I do own them. I paid so much for each customer."

"Suppose one of them moves away, what then?"

"In that case it's my loss, but while they are on my route you have no right to persuade them to give me up for you."

"It's your business to protect your trade. There is competition in all businesses. Drummers try to take customers from other drummers. Lots of business firms send solicitors out to get trade, and the men get it where they can. I have the same right, and I intend to do it."

"Then I'll knock your head off."

"You won't knock the head off anybody in this store," said Billy, coming forward. "Get out of here or I'll throw you out."

The man aimed a blow at Billy.

The boy ducked quick as a wink and punched the caller in the stomach.

Then they clinched, and Billy was getting the worst of it when Fred came from behind the counter and, grabbing the newsdealer, dragged him out on the sidewalk by main force.

"If you come here looking for trouble again, we'll give you all you want of it," said the senior partner. "Now go and look after your own affairs."

The man went, but not without breathing threats against Fred.

Inside of a week the firm had doubled its newspaper trade, and was reaching out for more.

Another dealer called and put up a protest, for he had lost a dozen customers through Fred.

The boy gave him the same argument he had given the other newsdealer.

"It isn't a square deal," said the man. "You've got a store and I haven't. You are taking the bread out of my mouth."

"All right, since you put it that way, I'll stop canvassing except for new people who move into the neighborhood. You have no special claim on them."

"Whoever catches a new customer has a right to him," admitted the man, so the matter was adjusted between them.

The other dealer, however, tried to injure Fred by getting boys to steal his papers after he had left them at various addresses.

Billy investigated as soon as complaints came in, and he caught a boy going around taking the papers.

He followed the boy to the newsdealer's stand, and saw him hand them over to the man, who paid the boy something.

Then Billy followed the boy and found out who he was.

That morning Fred got out a warrant against the dealer, and he was arrested.

He denied the charge in court, but Billy produced the boy, and the magistrate gave the dealer six months on the Island for petit larceny.

His wife had to run the business to save it.

During the first week in December Fred began to display a line of holiday goods, including a handsome lot of booklets.

Later he put in Christmas and New Year cards.

He had 1,000 circulars printed, and Billy distributed them where he thought they would do the most good.

The firm did a fine business during the holidays.

Fred arranged with a phonographic company to put in a supply of their very latest, as well as their most popular, records, and got a suitable instrument to play them on.

It proved a success, and brought much new custom to the store itself as well.

After the first of the new year things dropped off a good bit, but the business, nevertheless, panned out a very satisfactory profit.

With the first of February business began picking up again.

On the first of March the landlord came around, told Fred that his lease would expire on May 1, and asked him if he wanted to renew it.

"Sure," replied Fred.

"The rent will be \$60 a month," said the landlord.

Fred protested against such a big raise, and said the firm was willing to give \$50.

The landlord shook his head.

"Everybody has been getting \$50 for these stores," he said. "I let your predecessor have it for \$40 to give him a start. The business is now established and will stand the raise."

"We've only been running it for a little over four months, and we bought the business with the understanding that the rent would be \$40 right along."

"Then Dixon didn't tell you the truth, for I told him on the first of last October that if he intended to remain after May 1 he would have to pay \$60, as all the landlords have agreed to advance rents to that figure."

"I suppose we'll have to pay, for you have us by the throat."

"Not at all. You can find a store somewhere else, I guess."

"But we couldn't carry our business with us. How long a lease will you give us?"

"I'll make it two years to give you a show."

"Make it three and you'll give us a better show."

"I will if you will agree to pay \$70 for the third year."

"That isn't fair."

"It's fair for me, and I'm looking after my own interests."

A compromise was finally made for \$65 for the third year, and Fred signed the new lease.

Twenty dollars raise in rent after May 1 impelled the boys to get a hustle on, and they began a steady advertising scheme with circulars calling attention to their goods and their superior character.

The boys frequently went out of their way to accommodate their customers, and strove in every way to make their store popular in the neighborhood.

And they succeeded even beyond their expectations.

A year later the vacant lots near by having been built upon, their business doubled, and they were making a fine profit.

If we had the space we would follow them further on their upward march.

That being impossible, we can only say that their success grew with time, and they took the adjoining store as their trade expanded.

Thus we have shown how two boys thrown on the world started business that won out on a dollar.

Next week's issue will contain "A SPECULATOR AT 16; OR, THE LAD WHO WORKED HIS BRAINS." (A Wall Street Story.)

**SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.**



## CURRENT NEWS

After having masqueraded as a man for sixty years and having served as a soldier in General Grant's army during the Civil War, "Albert" Cashier, whose sex was discovered at the Soldiers' Home, Quincy, Ill., recently, was sent to an asylum for the insane the other day. The woman was born in Ireland seventy-three years ago. She came to America as a stowaway, clad in boy's clothes. When the war started she enlisted in Company 9, Ninety-fifth Illinois Infantry, and fought through many battles. Some years ago she entered the Soldiers' Home.

United States secret service officers recently arrested W. C. Vaughn as the leader of a gang which had circulated a large number of counterfeit gold pieces in the Northwest. They also arrested Harry S. Stone and Charles Dutcher. The headquarters and mint of the counterfeiters are said to have been in a little cottage in Seattle. The coins are of \$5 denomination and are close imitations of the genuine pieces. More than one hundred of them have been rejected by banks recently. Vaughn was a saloon-keeper in Great Falls, Mont., at one time. Stone is a civil engineer and was formerly employed in Glacier National Park, Montana.

The Paris police are poorly paid. The maximum salary attainable by a "sergent de ville" is \$360 a year. In view of the high cost of living in Paris this amount is inadequate to maintain a family in any degree of comfort, and the married members of the force have frequently to supplement their income as best they can. Some of them earn a few francs by working as market porters during their time off duty. Others do boot repairing, and there is one who does odd tailoring jobs. Still, in spite of these hardships, there are always plenty of men eager to join the force, about ten candidates being available for every vacancy that occurs.

August Pajonk, of Chicago, who, under the names of "Mrs. Anna Schwartz" and "Miss Eva Kline," masqueraded as a marriageable woman who would bring beauty and wealth to her husband, was sentenced to two years in the penitentiary for using the mails to defraud. In addition to obtaining more than \$3,000 from men who believed they could marry the original of attractive photographs sent them by Pajonk, the defendant obtained much money through mail orders for choice geraniums which never grew. The matrimonial venture was staged in Pittsburgh and the fictitious geranium bed was in a suburb of Chicago, where Pajonk lived for a time.

A feature of the international regatta to be held in connection with the Panama-Pacific Exposition next year will be a race for motor cruisers from New York to San Francisco for prizes aggregating \$10,000. Preliminary arrangements for the contest were announced by the exposition recently. The distance to be traversed is, ap-

proximately, 5,000 nautical miles, and about one month will be required for the race. Deep-sea boats of sixty-five feet water line and over will be the contestants. Two entrants from New York have been announced. The regatta plans call for races for every type of speed and cruising boat. A committee made up of motor boat men from various parts of the United States will be selected by the exposition to take charge of the events.

Alice Heyne, of Philadelphia, a young German girl, who is accused of jewel thefts amounting to \$10,000, was arrested the other night at a ball as she was leading the grand march. The detectives said the girl was wearing gems she had stolen from Mrs. William L. Elkins, by whom she formerly was employed as a maid. The specific charge against the girl was the theft of a sapphire bracelet valued at \$250 from the home of W. W. Frazier, where she was employed after leaving the Elkins' household. A passion for impressing relatives and friends who she had left behind in Europe seems to have been the ruling motive in the girl's alleged operations. The girl was in the habit of arraying herself in various gowns belonging to Mrs. Elkins and having herself photographed. These pictures she sent to relatives abroad. A photographer told the Magistrate he had been summoned to the Elkins home several times to make pictures of a Countess, who was visiting the family. When he arrived at the house he was met by Alice Heyne, dressed each time in a different costume. She said she was especially fond of posing on the grand stairway of the Elkins' home with a ball gown draped about her figure.

Orville Wright, who is in Boston, expresses the opinion that the round-the-world airship flight, which the Panama-Pacific Exposition is planning, is not impossible of accomplishment under the modified conditions. But he does not believe that present-day machines are capable of crossing the Atlantic. "It is," he said, "a bare possibility that a one-man machine, without a float and favored by a wind of from fifteen miles an hour, might succeed in getting across, but such an attempt would be the height of folly. When one comes to increase the size of the craft the possibility rapidly fades away. This is because of the difficulties of carrying sufficient fuel for covering the required distance. On the basis of the figures, which I have worked out, I find that no less than 53 per cent. of the entire load, including the weight of the machine itself and all, would have to be fuel. In other words, if the aeroplane, loaded ready to start, weighed 1,000 pounds with aviator and all aboard, of that total 530 pounds must be gasoline. And these figures are based on the most efficient performance of the motor all the way and the lowest known fuel consumption. It will readily be seen, therefore, why the Atlantic flight is out of the question."



# CHEEK AND CHANCE

—OR—

## TRAVELING ON HIS WITS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER XX (Continued).

"Is that the clerk?" asked Andy.

"The night porter, sir!"

"Send the clerk and the proprietor here at once. Tell them to send for an officer. I have caught a thief in my room."

An exclamation came from the surprised servant, and he was heard to hurry away. Smythe was much agitated.

"Look here," he said. "You don't guy worth a cent. This is all a practical joke——"

"Is it, Mr. Smith?"

"My name is Smythe."

"Well, Smythe or Smith, you'll find the practical joke a costly one. Grown very white, haven't you, since I saw you last. Had great grief, have you? Well, I'm sorry."

Cold sweat came out on the villain's forehead. He was trembling like an aspen. Again he pleaded. But Andy unfastened the door, and then returned to bed still keeping him under the pistol.

Some time had now elapsed. Suddenly footsteps were heard, and in rushed two men. One was the clerk, and the other the proprietor, much excited.

"Where is the thief?" cried the clerk. "Ah, what is this?"

He stared at Andy and at R. Peter Smythe.

"There is the thief," said Andy. "He broke into my room while I was asleep. You will find my clothes in his room now. He has robbed me, and meant to murder me with this knife."

"Mercy on us!" cried the clerk. "I thought you two gentlemen were friends. You came together and ordered connecting rooms——"

"I did not," said Andy.

The clerk said no more. He knew this was true. The proprietor began to deplore the incident.

"I have sent for an officer," he declared. "The fellow shall be taken care of."

"I beg of you to listen," cried Smythe. "This is all a practical joke——"

"So I think," began the clerk.

"That is a lie!" cried Andy with flashing eyes. "This scoundrel has followed me for months past, and would murder me if he could."

At this moment steps were heard on the stairs.

The officers were coming.

The effect upon Smythe was thrilling. He drew himself up, gave a gasp, and then made a desperate leap for

the inner room. Andy did not fire. He did not care to kill a human being.

But he sprang out of bed in pursuit, shouting:

"Catch him! Don't let him escape."

A sound of breaking glass and wood was heard. When the officers and others entered Smythe's room it was found empty.

The villain had cleared sash, glass and all and, leaping fifteen feet to the ground below, had escaped through a dark alley. Officers scoured the vicinity in vain.

Andy cared little now that his own safety was assured. The clerk stammered excuses.

"Really, sir, I thought you were friends. If I had thought——"

"That is all right," declared Andy. "I'll lock these doors and go back to sleep. My clothes are all right. I haven't lost anything, which is some consolation."

The affair leaked out and was the talk of the little town next day. Andy was the subject of many inquiries and he did a great day's business in Burnham that day.

But a great surprise was in store for him. Glancing at an evening paper he read a startling heading.

### CHAPTER XXI.

#### ANDY MEETS OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

This was what Andy read:

"After many years, under sentence for murder, Jason Bent is cleared by the sudden return of his supposed victim, Jim Prime, whose body was supposed to have been thrown into the Atlantic Ocean."

Then followed a long and detailed story of the affair, which had made of Jason Bent a fugitive from justice all these years. How on the little lumber schooner Prime had attacked him, and in self-defense Jason had hurled him back, only to send Prime overboard in the darkness of a tempestuous night.

How a body had been found which was positively identified as Prime's. How the crew had basely testified that Jason had maliciously murdered Prime.

But Prime had been picked up by a lobster man, in a dory, after floating all night on a plank. Out of revenge he had permitted the law to take its course, and would have seen Jason hung.



But Jason had chanced to identify him as we have seen in a previous chapter at the Preble House in Portland. He had followed Prime and forced him to confess.

It was a thrilling story, and as Andy read it he murmured a fervent prayer of thanks for Jason.

"I am glad," he muttered. "Jason will now make a man of himself."

The next morning Andy left Burnham. He took the train for Augusta. It was his purpose to canvass that town and return to Portland.

The train sped along at rapid speed. Andy was engaged in reading a newspaper and did not notice a trim young lady who entered the car and occupied the seat opposite him.

Looking up suddenly he gave a start, and flushed a trifle. The young lady did the same, then smiled in recognition.

"Belle Davis!" exclaimed Andy. "Is it you?"

"It is nobody else, Andy!" replied the daughter of the selectman of Greendale. "I am glad to see you."

"And I am glad to see you," said Andy, heartily. "Are the folks all well?"

"All nicely," replied Belle. "We have spoken of you often, Andy."

"And I have often thought of you," answered the young drummer.

"Why have you never come to see us?"

"Well," said Andy, bluntly, "you ought to know the reason why. I was, as the diplomats say, *persona non grata* at your house."

"Oh," said Belle, earnestly, "mamma and papa were both awfully sorry. Mamma judged you too harshly. They would give anything to make amends."

This softened Andy's heart.

"Perhaps appearances may have justified their view of matters," he conceded. "But at the time I felt a great wrong had been done me, but that is of the past. When I can make it convenient I shall visit Greendale."

"Pray do so!"

"But what are you doing in this part of the country?"

"I am at a young ladies' finishing school in Augusta," replied Belle. "I shall graduate this spring."

"Indeed? That is pleasant."

"Perhaps you will answer me a like question."

"Oh," said Andy, "it would be a long story. I have met with many changes and some thrilling experiences. Tell your father that fortune has smiled upon me, and that I am heir to seventy-five thousand dollars."

Belle's eyes opened wide. An instant reserve came over her. Country lass that she was, this bit of information seemed to make of Andy in her eyes a personage much above her humble station.

"I congratulate you upon your good fortune," she said, formally.

A constraint now marred the rest of the journey. This vexed Andy, for riches did not elevate him a peg, and he had not proclaimed his good luck in the manner of a boast.

But the train soon rolled into Augusta, and the two young travelers took leave of each other. Andy lifted his hat politely, and Belle gave him a shy curtesy and was gone.

He gazed after her neat figure with a sudden catch in his breath.

"If there was no Nellie Spencer," he thought guiltily. "But, pshaw! Belle is a good girl."

Then he turned and strode out of the station. He had reached the street, when a thrilling cry reached his ears.

People on the sidewalk scattered, and down the street Andy saw a runaway horse coming at full speed.

No person was in the carriage to which it was attached, but there was the risk of other teams or people in the way of the furious animal. Andy dropped his traveling bag, his impulse being to attempt to stop the horse.

But before he could reach the curb he saw a sturdy figure dart into the street right before the horse. There was a struggle, a slide over greasy pavings, and the horse was mastered. Danger was averted and people flocked to the spot to congratulate the hero of the episode.

Something in the man's figure looked familiar to Andy.

He crossed the street and approached him. As he did so the man looked up and full into Andy's face.

An instant recognition was the result, and each dashed toward the other.

"Andy Dunn!"

"Jason!"

The next moment they were fairly embracing in the crowd. It was like the meeting of two brothers long separated.

"You have heard all?" asked Jason. "You know I am a free man?"

"I know all!" cried Andy. "We will never be parted again, Jason."

"Do you mean that?"

"With all my heart."

"That makes a new man of me. Andy, the past is buried. I can make my way now that the ban of the law is removed. Did you come in on this train?"

"Yes."

"Traveling salesman?"

"I am."

"Good enough! But I think you and I can do better. I have struck a rich idea for us——"

"I'll wager I have a better," said Andy.

A new impulse seized our young hero. It flashed through his mind in that moment, and he resolved to adopt it.

"Eh?" ejaculated Jason, vaguely. "It must be a good one."

"It is," replied Andy. "Come to my hotel with me, Jason. I have a long story to tell you. I also want your advice as well as your assistance."

Jason nodded in acquiescence.

"Lead on," he said. "I am with you heart and soul in any enterprise, though it must be a good one to be better than mine."

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ANDY SECURES CO-OPERATION.

To the hotel the two friends went. Not until after they had partaken of a hearty dinner did Andy acquaint Jason with the subject on his mind.

(To be continued)



## FACTS WORTH READING

### THE OKLAHOMA.

The biggest and most powerful American fighting ship afloat was formally added to the United States navy at the Camden, N. J., yard of the New York Shipbuilding Company March 23d.

When Miss Lorena Jane Cruce, daughter of the Governor of Oklahoma, smashed a bottle of champagne against the prow of the super-dreadnought as the hull began to glide into the Delaware River, she said something, but it was lost in the splintering of the bottle and the cheers of the hundreds of guests. Those close to Miss Cruce declared she cried bravely:

"I christen thee Oklahoma."

At any rate that is the registered name of the man-of-war, which has 27,500 tons displacement, engines of 24,800 horsepower, a length of 575 feet, and which will carry ten fourteen-inch guns and twenty-one five-inch guns.

Just before Miss Cruce christened the Oklahoma an unusual incident occurred. Bishop E. E. Hess, of Muskogee, came to the fore of the official party on the platform beside the super-dreadnaught's prow, and in a brief invocation dedicated the warship to the "errands of peace and Christianity."

The same idea of "the navy as a pacificator" was expressed by Secretary Daniels after the christening when he alluded to the great fighting craft as the "typification of the national Christian spirit," and expressed the hope that the Oklahoma never would be called upon to fight or win a battle in warfare.

A feature of the Oklahoma will be her oil fuel, which will be carried in the double bottom of the ship, thus eliminating the necessity of coal bunkers.

### COAL MINE EXPLOSIONS.

Not a few notable examples of danger periods in coal mines have occurred simultaneously with periods of seismic unrest. As examples of such coincidences in recent years may be cited the Mount Pelee period, 1912, marked by the loss of 550 lives in four mine explosions; the Formosa, Japan, 1906, costing several thousand lives and \$45,000,000 property loss, marked by the terrible Courtieres explosion, in which 1,200 lives were sacrificed; the Takashima explosion, 307 lives, and a number of less fatal explosions in West Virginia and Colorado, which were almost immediately followed by the San Francisco disaster, that destroyed \$300,000,000 worth of property and over 2,000 lives. The entire period covered less than two months and was followed four months later by the destructive Valparaiso earthquake, with a property loss of \$250,000,000 and 7,000 lives, which was almost immediately followed by a remarkable series of mine explosions at Bluefield, W. Va., thirty lives; Raton, N. M., fifteen lives; Windgate, England, twenty-five lives; Pocahontas, Va., thirty-five lives, etc.

This was followed, again, by the Kingston, Jamaica, disaster, January, 1907, with a \$10,000,000 property loss

and 1,000 lives, which was coincident with the renewed activity of Mount Etna and earthquake in Sumatra, costing 1,500 lives. Simultaneous with this outbreak was the loss, in mine explosions, of twenty-four lives at Primero, Colo.; 250 at Essen, Germany; twelve at Lorentz mine; eighty-four at Stuart, and twenty-five at Thomas, W. Va., and numerous others in other States. The remarkable concomitance of these periods of seismic unrest and danger in mines due to prevalence of gas point to the consideration of the globe as a unit, sensitive in a varying degree to the physical changes in its crust.

### TREED ALL NIGHT BY WOLVES.

Philip Morton, a 23-year-old Englishman, is lying in a critical condition at a lumber camp in the Chalk River district, Ottawa, Canada, as a result of a perilous experience in the woods which nearly cost him his life.

Following a lonely trail from a camp where he had given up work to another where he expected to secure a position as clerk, the young man was scented by a pack of wolves and for an entire night the ravenous animals forced him to remain in a tree. But for the fact that he was well wrapped he might have died of exposure. When daylight broke the wolves left the trail on which they had Morton treed and he staggered nearly two miles through the bush with the toes of one foot and his hands frozen.

The camp where Morton started out from is situated eight miles from the one he was bound for. He undertook the journey alone against the advice of older bushmen, and had not a firearm of any kind on him. He was within a few miles of his destination when he heard the pack howling some distance behind him. It was late at night then and, terror-stricken, the young man climbed tree. The animals picked up the scent, however, and for hours they circled about the tree howling viciously.

What terror young Morton suffered no one but himself will ever know, and he was in such an exhausted state when he reached the camp that he was unable to tell anything about his adventure other than that toward daylight he thought of fire frightening the animals, and with some matches he set fire to some old country newspapers he had in his pocket and also fired his handkerchief and a scarf. He dropped the burning papers on the snow and it frightened the animals, and they slunk away.

The intense pain which Morton was suffering from his toes and hands would no doubt have turned his mind if he had not taken a chance and climbed down and started on his journey.

Arthur Robinson and Jules Lefebvre, the lumberjacks who related the story, said Morton was in such a state from fear and exposure that he was almost insane when he got to the camp they were at. He had fallen down time after time, and he said he crawled the greater part of the last mile. His principal concern seemed to be to get word of his condition to his parents in Birmingham, who had not heard of him for nearly three months.



# TEN-DAY ISLAND

OR,

## THE SECRET OF OLD 33

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER X (Continued).

So all the boys could do was to watch Susie as she disappeared in the distance.

It left John Jacks with a very lonely feeling, you may be sure, but as for Joe, he didn't care a rap; as long as he had his beloved John Jacks with him, Joe would have been contented in the middle of the desert of Sahara.

As Susie had carried the gold coins away with her, John Jacks determined to get some more, for there was still plenty of time before dark.

So he stripped off his clothes and dove into the bay again, leaving Joe watching him on the shore.

The water in the bay was by no means rough, and John Jacks, skilled diver that he was, had no trouble in throwing himself down to the bottom.

He swam around over the sands for a few seconds, but could see nothing of the spread of golden coins which he had discovered before.

Had the sand washed over them and covered them up, or had he made a mistake in the place, in spite of all his care?

John Jacks felt worried about it. What if he never should be able to find the place again?

He fretted over it so that he started to rise to the surface, when all at once he made a discovery which sent a wild thrill of joy through his heart.

It was the corner of a great box or chest sticking up out of the sand.

Was it one of the treasure chests?

John Jacks felt sure that it could not be anything else.

To better mark the spot he immediately let himself rise to the surface, coming up as straight as he possibly could.

"Where's your gold?" asked Joe, seeing that his hands were empty.

"Down below! Lots of it!" shouted John Jacks. "We keep it in chests now!"

### CHAPTER XI.

#### GIANT FOOTPRINTS ON THE SAND.

"We can get that chest up without any diving suit, Joe."

"Of course we can," replied Joe, who would have said yes to any proposition John Jacks might make.

"That is, if we only had a rope," added John Jacks. "I wonder if there isn't some rope in the vault?"

Joe was ready enough to go and see, and by the time John Jacks was sufficiently rested for another dive, he was back again, bringing with him a coil of stout rope long enough to reach twice around the cove.

"The very thing!" cried John Jacks. "Just what we want. I believe we can do it, Joe."

The next move was to go down again with the rope.

John Jacks thought that he had been very careful to mark his place, yet he did not see anything of the chest when he went down.

Again and again he tried it, and the fourth attempt was crowned with success.

There was the chest just as he had seen it before.

The next thing was to get the rope around it.

John Jacks had arranged his noose all right before starting, but every one who has tried it knows how difficult it is to do business under water.

Scraping away the sand, the plucky boy did manage to get the rope around the chest. He pulled the knot firmly, and rose to the surface.

"Got it?" cried Joe.

"Hope so! Can't say," was the reply. "We shall soon know."

The next move was to warp the rope around the big tree.

"Now, then, for it!" cried John Jacks. "Lay hold here, Joe, and we will soon see where we are at. Gently! Gently! If it pulls off we are goners."

There was some resistance, but it was only for a moment, and then, to his disgust, John Jacks felt the rope lose its hold on the chest.

"It's off!" cried Joe.

"Yes; don't pull. The rope will guide me back to the place again, and I shan't have to hunt for it. I think we moved it a little, Joe."

This proved to be the case.

When John Jacks got down below again he found that about half the length of the chest was out of the sand.

It was now a very much easier matter to attach the rope firmly to it, and in a few moments the boys were pulling at it again, and this time there was no slipping, but it was all they could do to move the rope around the tree.

"Pull!" cried John Jacks. "Slow and easy, now! That's the talk! She's coming! Confound it, the rope has slipped off again!"

It was very provoking; still it was to be expected. Nothing remained but to go down again.



With the rope as a guide it was easy to go straight to the chest.

It was entirely out now, and lay on its side upon the sand, a clumsy, old-fashioned box of some sort of hard wood.

John Jacks tried to lift it, but it would not budge an inch.

Fastening the rope so that there was no possible chance of its slipping, he returned to the surface, and this time the efforts of the boys were crowned with success.

Little by little they managed to work the heavy chest up out of the water.

Joe gave a wild shout as it appeared above the surface.

"Pull away! Pull away!" cried John Jacks.

"Hold on!" said Joe, suddenly stopping. "I guess we don't want to pull any more."

It was most startling, seeing that the boys felt so sure that they had the island all to themselves.

"Schooner ahoy! Schooner ahoy!" a voice in the distance suddenly shouted.

"Thunderation! Who can that be?" cried John Jacks, letting go of the rope.

"Let's push the chest back into the water, Johnny!" said Joe. "Whoever it is, we don't want them to see it. This is a bad job."

A bad job it certainly would be if any of the smugglers happened to be on the island and should get a sight of the chest.

John Jacks adopted Joe's suggestion at once, and the boys, running into the water, managed with a great effort to turn the chest over, which put it out of sight.

Meanwhile the cry had been repeated several times.

The sound evidently came from the island over beyond the pine grove.

"We must find out what it means right away," said John Jacks, and he hurriedly pulled his clothes on, after which he and Joe started for the trees.

By this time the cries had ceased, and the boys could see nobody at all, look in whichever direction they would.

What they did see was a small schooner in the offing. It was making away from the island, and as the breeze was fair, was rapidly passing out of sight.

Before the boys reached the pine grove it had disappeared.

"That's nothing," said Joe. "Them schooners are coming and going all the time. You bet that fellow will give Ten Day Island a wide berth to-day!"

"Why to-day any more than any other day?" asked John Jacks.

"Because there's going to be a storm. Don't you see them clouds gathering? If you had lived around here as long as I have you would know what that means."

"I don't know anything about that," replied John Jacks, "but I do know that I want to find out who our neighbor on the island is; that's what's bothering me now."

And it continued to bother the boys for the rest of the day, for search as they would, they could discover no one, and yet they knew that some one was on Ten Day Island besides themselves.

The proof was positive, for there in the pine grove were

footprints in the sand, and there were more of them down on the beach.

Joe first discovered them. They were the footprints of a man with enormously large feet.

"A giant!" cried Joe. "Gee! Who can it be?"

"He's got big feet all right, but he may not be a giant for all that," said John Jacks. "Whoever he is he's likely to be an infernal nuisance. We can't touch that chest while there is any one spying about."

"Suppose we follow the footprints and see where they lead to," said Joe, and they did it, and right here the mystery came in.

The footprints seemed to begin at the pine grove, and there they also ended.

They passed around in a circle, leading off from it on one side and back again into it on the other. The circle had been so trodden down as to become a regular path, but it was complete and without a break except for the line of footprints leading out and the other line leading in.

"What in thunder does it all mean?" cried Joe. "Where did the fellow go to? Looks as though he had wings and flew away, hang me if it don't!"

And certainly it was a great mystery what could have become of the man.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE STORM.

The mysterious footprints were just as big a mystery when night fell over Ten Day Island as they were when Joe first discovered them, for nothing was seen of any stray giant with feet big enough to fill them, or, indeed, of any other man.

Nothing more was done about the chest. John Jacks declared that he would not touch it until he knew whether they were alone on the island or not.

Joe talked about his storm, and suggested that it might be washed away, but John Jacks didn't believe in Joe's storm.

After they had had their supper the biggest part of the sky still remained clouded and there was absolutely no wind.

Still Joe persisted that the storm was coming, and he stuck to it up to the time they turned in for the night.

It had been arranged with Susie that they should sleep in the smugglers' secret vault, which, of course, was the only shelter which the island afforded.

There was an old mattress and a pair of blankets there, as the vault was often used by men who sometimes assisted Susie in her peculiar work.

It was anything but a pleasant place to bunk in, however.

The air was close and stuffy with the trap-door down, and Joe, who kept talking about the giant all the while, was afraid to leave it up on his account.

"I don't want to have no feller with feet like that come pouncing down on us in the middle of the night," he declared. "That there cover has got to be kept down, or I shan't be able to sleep a wink."

(To be continued)



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A new type of dirigible controlled and propelled by wireless waves has been tested out at Genoa, Italy. By transforming the intermittent impulses of the wireless into a continuous current, the inventor has been able to operate the various propellers at will. The transforming device is contained within the basket, or car, of the dirigible, and also operates the bomb-dropping device by which the dirigible is designed to aid the army and navy in case of war.

Manama, the principal port of the Bahrein islands, the center of the pearl fisheries, gets its fresh water from the ocean from springs at the bottom of the sea. These springs well up strongly at a considerable depth, and the entire water supply of the town is obtained from them. The fresh water is procured in two ways—either in a goat-skin water bag, which a diver takes down with him and carefully closes before bringing it to the surface, or by letting down long hollow pipes of bamboo weighted at the lower end, through which the water rises uncontaminated to the surface.

Treasure hunters in search of valuables left on the beach at Atlantic City by the recent high tides are getting better returns than usually come to those engaged in such quests. Their search has proved a great source of interest and amusement to the throng of visitors there.

These "miners" daily delve into the sands at points most frequented by the summer bathing crowds. A former life guard, who earns a livelihood during the winter by a systematic search for money and jewelry, in digging under a pavilion recently found a diamond ring. This he sold for \$250. It was the most valuable find since the treasure hunt began after the recent big storm.

Harry W. Smith, formerly a resident of Pennsylvania, who fought in a Pennsylvania regiment in the Civil War, has had his sight restored in one eye after having been blind for nineteen years. His other eye was taken out shortly after the war. For several years Smith had sold knickknacks on the boardwalk at Atlantic City. He was led from place to place by a small granddaughter. In the early part of the winter the old soldier suffered a severe attack of rheumatism, and he had to be taken to the hospital for treatment. While awaiting his turn Dr. Frisch, an oculist, passed through, and, noticing his black glasses, asked Smith how long he had been blind. Dr. Frisch examined his eye and told him he thought he could restore his sight by an operation. The old man said he had all to gain and nothing to lose, and consented to the operation. Two weeks ago the bandages were removed and a little light was permitted to trickle into the room. The old man saw, and he gave a great shout of joy. When he looked at the basket which he had carried for years he exclaimed: "Heavens, that is certainly dirty, isn't it?"



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## BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

A silver dollar, uninclosed, was received at the Middletown (Conn.) postoffice from Cedar Rapids, Ia. It had a stamp on one side and on the other a paper bearing the word "Congratulations" and the address of Mrs. M. J. Booth, to whom it was delivered.

Count Zeppelin's aeroplane works at Friedrichshafen, it is announced in Berlin, are actively engaged in the construction of a waterplane capable of flying across the Atlantic. Count Zeppelin's engineers are proceeding with a view to making the attempt with one of their machines next year. The German National Flying Endowment makes the interesting announcement that, as Germany for the immediate future has a sufficient number of capable flying machine pilots, no more will be trained for the present at the endowment's expense.

In order to keep a steady, experienced population on the land, the Kaiser has worked out a scheme for the insurance of the agricultural laborers on his Cadenen estate. Each worker is insured for \$250 with the State Insurance Department. The premium, except a trifling portion, is paid by the Kaiser. The amount of the policy is payable to the heirs in the event of death or to the worker himself as soon as he reaches an age between 55 and 65, depending on the time when he entered into employment on the estate. The Kaiser hopes that neighboring farmers will emulate his example.

On a recent Saturday night 100 homes in Hastings, N. Y., rejoiced in the possession of a canary bird. Every bird had been bought that day, and every one had cost the buyer \$1. A peddler came that way one Saturday with a cartload of cages, each containing a canary bird whose singing qualities were guaranteed. They sold fast. On the following Monday the golden coats of the birds began to fade, and each was a gray bird, and the gray was that of the well-known English sparrow. The peddler who sold the painted canaries left town on Saturday night. He is not expected to return.

A seventy-five mile ride in a bucket high in the air will soon be possible in the Himalayas. An aerial cable-

way of that length—the longest in the world—is to be constructed on the plans of a Canadian engineer from the Punjab to the famous vale of Kashmir. The ruggedness of the country and the danger of rock slides and landslips makes a railroad track out of the question. Towers will be built nearly half a mile apart, and a cable will carry steel cars loaded with 300 or 400 pounds. The cable will be in five mile sections, but an arrangement has been adopted to automatically pass a car or bucket from one cable section to the next. Plenty of water power is conveniently at hand to develop electricity for hauling the buckets.

## JOKES AND JESTS.

"Pop, why does the moon get full?" "I don't know. Don't bother me." "Pop, I guess if the moon would only stick to the Milky Way it wouldn't get full, would it?"

Hubby—You may not believe it, but smoking is a remedy for my headaches," he apologized. "Most pigs are cured that way," responded his wife, without emotion.

"Your daughter plays some very robust pieces." "She's got a beau in the parlor," growled Pa Wombat, "and that loud music is to drown the sound of her mother washing the dishes."

"I went into a swell restaurant the other day and asked the waiter what I could get for twenty cents?" "What'd he tell you?" "He said I couldn't get anything there, but I might possibly get into another restaurant."

Very Young Man—You would not think it, but I've just paid five thousand pounds in cash for a house, all made by my own pluck and perseverance. Young Lady—Really! What business are you in? Very Young Man—I'm a son-in-law.

Lady—All your marine pictures represent the sea as calm. Why don't you paint a storm once in a while? Artist—We painters in oil can't do that, madam. We may outline a storm on the canvas, but, you see, as soon as we begin to spread on the oil colors the waves subside and the sea becomes as calm as a duck pond.

"Well, Silas, did you enjoy your trip to New York? What did you find new there?" "Why, somethin' wuth seein'. The hull place is full o' cabs with cash registers on 'em, an' red flags to show folks it's dangerous to dispute the fare. They call 'em taxidermy cabs, 'cause ef you don't mind the drivers'll jest take the skin off ye."

"That's a fine umbrella you carry." "Yes." "Did you come by it honestly?" "I haven't quite made it out. It started to rain the other day and I stepped into a doorway to wait till it stopped. Then I saw young fellow coming along with a nice large umbrella, and I thought if he were going as far as my house I would beg the shelter of his umbrella. So I stepped out and asked, 'Where are you going with that umbrella, young fellow?' and he dropped the umbrella and ran."



## RED EAGLE'S PLEDGE

By D. W. Stevens.

"I have private information from a renegade half-breed that Sitting Bull's band is plotting for war."

Col. Ramsden, of Fort Kearney, was conversing with Coonskin Kit, the famous government scout, within the stockade of the fort.

The scout uttered the words above recorded.

"Is your information to be relied on, Kit?"

"It is."

"But, for more than a year, the Sioux, whom we usually count as hostile, have been quiet and friendly."

"That's so."

Coonskin Kit went on:

"I know, colonel, you don't want to openly criticize the Indian Department."

"No. But the news you have brought troubles me much. I fear for the safety of Clair and the whole Maynard family."

"Give me half a dozen picked scouts, and I'll undertake to go through the hostile lines and bring the Maynard family into the fort."

"Bravely said. Choose your own men. My little sister is very dear to me, Kit, but you know I cannot leave the fort at a time like this."

"Let me see. Your sister, Miss Clair, has been visiting at Maynard's ranch, up the Yellowstone, for a week."

"Yes, and to-morrow or next day she is to set out to return to the fort, accompanied only by Mr. Maynard, my old friend. You have reported Indian signs up the river. The reds are between the fort and Maynard's ranch. And now that I know they are bent on hostilities, I fear Clair and her escort may fall into an ambush while on the way to the fort, if indeed Maynard's ranch has not already been attacked."

"That's so, but—Ha! Red Eagle, the Cheyenne!"

Coonskin Kit interrupted himself to pronounce the name of a noble-looking Indian, wearing the full eagle-feather head-dress of a chief.

The Cheyenne at that moment strode into the stockade.

"How, great chief? How, big white scout—how?"

With this characteristic greeting, the Cheyenne came up and shook hands with the colonel and Coonskin Kit.

Red Eagle had recently served as a hunter for the fort.

But he had been off on a scout for three days.

And he had just come in from the northwest—the country of the Sioux, the suspected hostiles.

"What news, chief?" asked the colonel, anxiously.

"Sioux on warpath."

"Where are they?"

"At big forks."

"Which way are they going?"

"Detached bands are raiding the upper ranches."

"And the main force?"

"With Sitting Bull at the forks."

"Not a moment must be lost. Kit, you must start to the rescue of Clair and her friends at once."

"Within the hour. Red Eagle, old pard, will you go with me?"

"Wah! Chief go. Maybe meet Cut Nose—Sitting Bull's big chief! Wah!" replied the Cheyenne.

There was an old feud between Red Eagle, the friendly, and Cut Nose, the hostile.

The latter had slain the Cheyenne's brother during the last Indian war, and it was generally known that Red Eagle had vowed vengeance upon the leading chief of Sitting Bull's band.

Half an hour later Coonskin Kit, with Red Eagle and four white scouts, was ready to start for the Maynard ranch.

"Bring my little sister safely into the fort and name your own reward, Red Eagle," said the colonel, who knew the daring and cunning Cheyenne was scarcely less to be relied on in this emergency than Coonskin Kit himself.

"Wah! Red Eagle will bring the white maiden to her brother safe, or Sioux take um scalp!" replied the Cheyenne, resolutely.

In a moment the little band of scouts, bent on a mission of peril, rode away from the fort.

All were well mounted and well armed.

Coonskin Kit and Red Eagle rode at the head of the party.

The route lay due northwest.

The sun had scarcely risen, and the grand valley of the Yellowstone presented a scene of beauty under the rays of the morning light.

The green meadows were studded with flowers of every hue, and it was a paradise for game.

Elk, antelope and buffalo abounded, and more than one troop of wild mustangs were sighted.

But no Indian signs were found until towards noon.

Then Red Eagle suddenly drew rein, and the others at once pulled up.

"Wah! Here trail."

Red Eagle pointed at the dust.

All saw the well-defined trail of a considerable band of mounted reds.

"Sioux! And they are steering in the direction of Maynard's ranch," said Coonskin Kit.

Red Eagle assented. The hoof-prints were intermingled. But the wonderful red trailer in a moment stated:

"Twenty-five braves go this way."

He had deciphered the tangle of the hoof-prints in a way the keenest white scout could scarcely have done.

But now Kit and the Cheyenne led the party on at greater speed.

The trail grew more and more fresh.

Evidently the hostile band was proceeding rather leisurely.

"How long ago do you say the Sioux passed here?" presently inquired Coonskin Kit of the Indian scout.

"Not long—two hours maybe—not much more," replied Red Eagle.

"Then we may beat them to Maynard's ranch."

"Wah! Chief say leave Sioux trail now."

"What for?"

"Make detour—get ahead of Sioux."



"Good!"

Coonskin Kit led the way to the right.

Presently the band was skirting along a strip of timber. They pressed on for miles.

Still they encountered no hostiles. Just at the close of day they came in sight of Maynard's ranch. It was miles from the home of any other white settler.

The band of Coonskin Kit galloped up to the log ranch house at full speed. At the door stood Clair Ramsden, the colonel's sister, a sweet young girl of sixteen.

And at her side was Mr. Maynard, the ranchman, two cowboys, and two women—the ranchman's wife and a domestic.

Coonskin Kit leaped from his horse, and saluting the party at the ranch door, to whom he was well known, he said:

"Prepare to set out for the fort at once. The Sioux are on the warpath and coming this way."

The announcement caused the faces of the women to pale. But the ranchman and the two cowboys only clutched their rifles and set their lips with determined expression.

They were brave men and accustomed to the dangers of frontier life.

No time was lost. In a brief space the entire party were mounted and riding away from the ranch.

There was a belt of timber about ten miles due south in the direct line of the route to the fort. As the party were approaching the timber, Red Eagle suddenly said:

"Sioux in woods! Quick to the left and ride for the rocky hills!"

The party instantly changed their course a moment later. Knowing their ambush must have been detected the Sioux—some twenty-five warriors—mounted upon their fleet ponies, dashed out of the cover.

"Wah! Cut Nose!" cried Red Eagle, recognizing his foe.

The whites reached the rocky hills ahead of the Sioux. Up a defile Red Eagle led the way.

"Follow, all, under the falls!" he cried, pausing at the edge of a sheet of water, that came plunging down from the high rocks above. The party dashed through the blinding torrent into a spacious secret cave under the falls.

"Wah! Red Eagle think Sioux not know this cave," said the chief then.

The party dismounted, and Red Eagle said:

"Chief steal out. Keep watch on rocks. Bring warning if Sioux come close."

Red Eagle at once left the cave.

Emerging from the torrent, he advanced a short distance.

Then he began to climb the lofty ledges, which towered all around.

He wished to gain a good post for a lookout.

At length he reached the top of a ledge.

Eagerly he glanced around.

Afar, at the foot of the hills, he saw the Sioux.

They had halted on the trail of the whites. And they were not so far distant but that the keen-eyed Cheyenne could count them.

"Twenty-four only—one Sioux gone! Ha! It is Cut Nose who is not with him braves," said the chief, in a moment.

He looked troubled. And while he continued to watch the hostiles, he kept himself well concealed.

Ere long he glanced back into the defile, beside the falls, whence he had come.

Stoical as he was, the Cheyenne started, as he made a thrilling discovery.

In the defile, just stealing out on foot from under the falls, he saw Cut Nose, the hostile.

He comprehended what that meant.

Clearly, Cut Nose had stealthily followed the trail of the whites, crept far enough under the falls to discover them, and was now meaning to bring up his band.

Red Eagle knew the fate of the colonel's sister and all the party in the cave depended upon himself alone.

He raised his rifle. He was about to fire at the Sioux. But no. He lowered the weapon. The report would bring Cut Nose's band upon the scene.

At that instant Cut Nose began to climb the rocks.

Red Eagle's face suddenly showed the satisfaction he then felt.

Red Eagle put aside his rifle, and crouching behind a rock, drew his long-bladed hunting-knife.

His dark eyes flashed. He meant to meet Cut Nose on the dizzy heights, right at the edge of a yawning chasm, and there engage with him in a duel to the death, to make good his pledge to Col. Ramsden and revenge the murder of his brother.

Presently Cut Nose reached the top of the ledge.

Then he came toward the Cheyenne, along the side of the chasm.

Suddenly Red Eagle made a leap.

The next instant his knife would have reached Cut Nose's heart, but the latter wheeled and caught Red Eagle's descending arm.

He dropped his knife, but he clutched the throat of the Sioux. The latter dropped his rifle and drew his knife. Red Eagle struck it from his grasp.

Still he maintained his hold upon the throat of the Sioux and prevented his uttering an alarm yell.

A desperate combat on the ledge ensued.

But suddenly, putting forth all his strength, Red Eagle hurled the Sioux backward down the chasm, to his death on the rocks far below.

Panting, breathless, the Cheyenne crept to the edge of the terrible fall. He saw the mangled form of the dead Sioux at the bottom of the chasm. Then he descended to the defile by the waterfall. Working hastily, he obliterated the trail of the white party for some distance. Then he concealed himself on a ledge.

Some hours later the hostile band came up the defile. But they lost the white trail where Red Eagle had obliterated it. They did not know the secret of the cave under the falls. Finally, without finding it, they withdrew. The next day the little band of whites made their way in safety to the fort.

Red Eagle had kept his pledge and made good his oath of vengeance.



## GOOD READING

George Blackwell, of Libby, Mont., brought to town an oddity in fish catching. This was a seven-hook set line upon which he had caught eight fish. One hook had first been taken by a charr about a foot long and later a large ling had swallowed the charr and was caught on the same hook.

As Charles Ehrhardt, a shoemaker of Shreveport, La., was preparing to half sole a discouraged blucher he, as a preliminary, filled his mouth full of brass tacks and ran his hand inside the shoe. There was something in the shoe and Ehrhardt pulled it out. The shoe was stuffed with money. Before it was emptied it had given up \$224 in green and yellow currency. Investigation showed that the shoe belonged to Dr. Charles E. Row. Ehrhardt wadded the money up and took it to the doctor with his repaired shoes. "Sure the money's mine," Dr. Row said, a bit sheepishly. "I was afraid burglars would get it so I stuffed it in that old shoe. I had forgotten all about it."

Because Will Schulte, the young man from Deepwater, Mo., who lost his right leg when he was run down by passenger train No. 3 on the Santa Fe, had the hallucination that the pain in the stump of his leg was caused by the toes of the foot being buried in a cramped condition, his father, W. T. Schulte, had the undertakers dig the foot up. The lower part of the leg had been buried in East-side cemetery, Hutchinson, Kan. In company with the father, S. F. Johnson unearthed the foot to show that the toes were in a perfectly straight condition. When it was replaced in the ground, great care was taken to lay it in a normal shape, with all the muscles straight. The injured boy rests well now, having spent several sleepless nights because of his dread.

Kansas has 1,200 women in the active management of farms, and there is not one who has not made a success of an agricultural life work. These women are scattered over fifty-four counties of the State, a little more than one-half the counties in Kansas. Most of the women owning farm lands rent the properties and generally they have an agent to look after affairs for them. But there are 1,200 women who are active managers of their own farms, and some of them are renters. The Kansas woman farmer is a scientific farmer. When women take over the stock they realize the necessity of study and work to be successful. It is estimated by the agricultural authorities that 98 per cent. of the women in the active management of the farms are members of the farmers' institutes.

Wandering in the last stages of exhaustion on the edge of the Sisquoo ranch in the Santa Barbara mountains, Cal., Genaro Fernandez was found a few days ago by vaqueros. Eight days before he and his brother Daniel started from Maricopa without blankets on foot to cross the range. Daniel Fernandez could not keep up under the

diet of acorns, grass and herbs which they had to resort to when they got lost and probably is dead. Realizing both of them must perish if they stayed together Daniel persuaded his brother to go ahead in search of help. A searching party has gone out from Santa Maria in an effort to find the missing man. The parents of the two live at No. 144 South Glass street, Los Angeles. Going to Bakersfield for railroad work, they were sent to Maricopa, whence they decided to go to Santa Barbara. Genaro said they were informed there was a good trail across the mountains with numerous ranch houses. At the top of the ridge they were caught in a snowstorm which lasted two days. Their food consisted of grass, herbs and acorns from woodpecker holes in the trees.

New York's cottage colony in Greenwich, Conn., received its first information of the theft nearly one year ago of a \$5,000 diamond ring, through a suit for \$6,000 filed in the Superior Court by Mrs. Thomas M. Hodgins of New York against the American Bonding Company of Baltimore for burglary insurance. The ring disappeared immediately following a house party given for their rich friends by Mr. and Mrs. Hodgins, at their Indian Field place. Papers in the suit say the affair was kept quiet on the request of the bonding company, in order that the detectives might work without exciting attention. The house party occurred on the night of May 9 last. Mrs. Hodgins sets forth in her complaint that her husband noticed the ring on her finger at 4 o'clock in the morning, at which hour all of the overnight guests in the house had retired, except two of her most intimate friends. When she awoke at 8 o'clock the next morning she could not find the ring. She suspected no one, supposing it had slipped off her finger. The company refused to pay, on the ground that no burglary had been shown.

For fifteen years N. E. Swanson, No. 1245 South Clarkson street, Denver, Colo., has been working on a cube puzzle and now he has finished it and is working on the machinery for its manufacture. It comprises thirty bits of wood that fit together and each piece is locked by one or more pieces. To put it together or take it apart the various locks must work in harmony and the pieces must fit into each other. "I believe that I have the most intricate puzzle ever invented," said Swanson, "for to put it together or to take it apart one must know the thirty pieces as he knows his alphabet; that is, he must recognize each piece. Then he must know how the locks come, how to press this or that piece so that it will operate upon another. I believe that I am safe in saying that there is no man who can take it apart and put it together within twenty-four hours, and very few can work it. It is a puzzle that will puzzle any enthusiast." Swanson says that when he has finished his machinery, the puzzle can be turned out in quantities. He proposes to make the puzzle in Denver and to market it all over the world.



## ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

### FIRES 12 BIG GUNS AT ONCE.

At the artillery trials of the new Italian dreadnought Julius Cæsar all of her twelve guns of 13 inches calibre in triple turrets were fired simultaneously with excellent results. It is said that such a severe trial is unprecedented. It was tried by the Austrian dreadnought Viribus Unitis and she was seriously damaged when the guns were fired.

### GLUTTON COLLAPSES.

After betting \$5 that he could eat ten loaves of bread in three hours George Williams, of Sharon, Pa., is out the \$5 and faces a doctor's bill several times that size. Williams had fasted twenty-four hours, and the first three loaves disappeared rapidly. On the fourth loaf he slowed up. On the fifth he looked worried. Distress turned into agony as the sixth and seventh disappeared, and after two bites from the eighth Williams collapsed.

### PAYS 2,500 PER CENT.

The Colonial Diamond Mining Company of German Southwest Africa is probably the world's biggest dividend payer. It has "reduced" its 1913 dividend by 1,300, to 2,500 per cent., having paid 3,800 for 1912. In 1910 2,400 was paid, and 2,500 in 1911.

The company's capital is only \$2,500. Its managing director and chief shareholder was once a humble railway official named Satuch. Now he is a multi-millionaire. He will soon be made chairman of the German Imperial Diamond Administration.

### HELD FOR WIRELESS SPYING.

A sensational arrest on a charge of military espionage is reported from Kieff, Russian. M. Jhidkovsky, the chief telegraph engineer in charge of an important junction at Zhonerinka and a talented inventor, established his own wireless station, ostensibly for scientific experiments.

Recently he had paid several visits to foreign capitals in the interests, as he alleged, of his technical branch. He was arrested the other day, on the charge of intercepting wireless messages from the War Office staff at St. Petersburg to the southwestern command at Kieff and of communicating them to a foreign government.

### CUTS OFF HIS OWN HAND.

The third operation performed within a few days on the left arm of Wallace Rittenhouse of Walsenburg, Colo., probably will save his life.

Rittenhouse, who is at St. Mary's Hospital here, performed the first operation himself when he cut off his left hand when he was caught in machinery.

While he was working with a pump in a mine at Walsenburg, Rittenhouse's hand was caught. He was unable to free himself. With a large pocketknife he cut off his

left hand at the wrist, turned off the dynamo and fainted. He was brought to Pueblo in a critical condition. A second operation was necessary, as serious complications had developed.

Rittenhouse is twenty-three years old and is married. He formerly lived in Pueblo.

### A 7-YEAR-OLD POET.

The Poetry Review of London publishes several poems of a remarkable 7-year-old boy, Logan Wiltshire, who cannot yet read or write, but dictates to his mother, who records his words with "the most scrupulous exactitude."

One example of his work is the following:

The god of dreams came to me last night, and I had a dream of the world when the world was a child.

And in this child-world there are two gods, the god of nature and the god of genius.

The god of nature provided all the materials, and the god of genius took them and made them into wonderful things. Nature gave genius a pair of leaves, and genius made them into wings—wings for birds, wings for butterflies, wings for all things that fly.

Such a beautiful dream, such a wonderful world—the world when it was a child.

All his efforts, The Review says, show the inspiration of a true poet and wonderful power of self-expression.

### PIG'S EYE GIVES SIGHT.

Sight has been given to the left eye of David Kane, 9-months-old child of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Kane of Gettysburg, Pa., through the grafting of the cornea of a pig's eye to the child's eye-ball, according to physicians at a hospital in Baltimore. Certain tests, they declare, have brought out this fact without a doubt.

When the bandage was removed from the eye it was declared that the child followed the course of a lighted candle which was moved in front of him. Another test that brings out the fact more clearly is that the child now winks his eyelid if a finger or a small object is waved close to the eye. The movement of the eyelid is the natural one.

The disease from which little David had suffered since he was three weeks old is known as staphyloma of the cornea. Both eyes became affected and the child was practically blind. Sight was partially restored to the right eye, however, after treatment. The left seemed to be in a hopeless condition and it was only as a last resort that the operation was decided upon.

The operation was performed recently and the cornea of the pig's eye was used because it was said it more closely resembles the human cornea than that of any other animal. Child and pig were placed under an anaesthetic and the outer covering of the animal's eye was removed. It was quickly placed on the eyeball of the child. The child's eye to-day is said to be perfectly clear and free from inflammation.



### LITTLE CLINCHERS



With a pair of these creepers clinched on your shoes you can defy the slipperiest ice or snow. No matter how slippery the road or how steep the hill, these claws of steel will carry you safely over them. A child can adjust them in 30 seconds. No nails, straps, screws or rivets are needed. They will not injure your shoes. No need to remove them indoors—simply fold the heel-plate forward, reversing the spikes under the instep. They are comfortable, durable and invisible. Just the thing for postmen, golfers, hunters, woodsmen, brakemen, miners and all who would insure life and limb in winter weather. 25 cents a pair, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

### THE FOUNTAIN RING.



A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

### DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

### ROUGH AND READY TUMBLERS.



These lively acrobats are handsomely decorated with the U. S. flag and with gold and silver stars and hearfs. Upon placing them upon any flat surface and tilting it they at once begin a most wonderful performance, climbing and tumbling over each other and chasing each other in every direction, as if the evil spirit was after them, causing roars of laughter from the spectators. They actually appear imbued with life. What causes them to cut up such antics is a secret that may not be known even to the owner of the unruly subjects. If you want some genuine fun send for a set of our tumblers.

Price per set, 10c. mailed, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

### IMITATION FLIES.



Absolutely true to Nature! A dandy scarf-pin and a rattling good joke. It is impossible to do these pins justice with a description. You have to see them to understand how lifelike they are. When people see them on you they want to brush them off. They wonder "why that fly sticks to you" so persistently. This is the most realistic novelty ever put on the market. It is a distinct ornament for anybody's necktie, and a decided joke on those who try to chase it.

Price, 10c. by mail postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

### BINGO.



It is a little metal box. It looks very innocent. But it is supplied with an ingenious mechanism which shoots off a harmless cap when it is opened. You can have more fun than a circus with this new trick. Place the BINGO in or under

any article and it will go off when the article is opened or removed. It can be used as a funny joke by being placed in a purse, cigarette box or between the leaves of a magazine, also, under any movable article, such as a book, tray, dish, etc. The BINGO can also be used as a Burglar Alarm or as a Theft Preventer by being placed in a drawer, money till, under a door or window, or under any article that would be moved or disturbed should a theft be attempted.

Price 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

### YOU ALL WANT THIS MEDAL!

You Can Get One for Six Cents!

Has a picture of Fred Fearnot on one side and Evelyn on the other. The chief characters of



"WORK AND WIN" The Medals are beautifully fire-gilt.

In order that every reader of this Weekly may secure one or more of these medals, we have put the price away below cost, as you will see when you receive it. Send to us THREE TWO-CENT POSTAGE STAMPS, and we will send the medal to any address, postage paid, by return mail.

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Wonderful instrument that creates a new vocal power. Sounds appear to come from a great distance away. Held unseen in the mouth. Mystifies everybody. Send a dime for yours today. Our great catalog of Magic and Mystery included free. McKINLEY CO., 29 WINONA, MINN.



### Great Fun! Tree Toad Mouthpiece

Startle and amaze your friends. Imitate the Tree Toad's voice to perfection and warble and trill the beautiful song of the Mocking Bird. Concealed in the mouth; it cannot be seen. Used by stage performers. Don't miss it. Think of the fun you can have posing as a ventriloquist. Set of 2 for only 10 cents or 12 for 25 cents. Don't miss this.

MOUTHPIECE COMPANY, Dept. K, Frenchtown, N. J.



STAMP COLLECTING is interesting, instructive and profitable. Only 10c. starts you with Album and 538 stamps, including Rhodesia, Jamaica (Waterfalls), China (Dragon), Malay (Tiger), etc. Big lists and \$5 Coupons Free! We Buy Stamps.

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Flash our "Millionaire's Bank Roll" and make 'em all "rubber." These goods are made in Washington and are dandies. Easy money hand ling them. Send 10c for sample "wad." and Big Catalog. Address, McKINLEY CO., Dept. T, WINONA, MINN.

### NEW TEN-CENT FOUNTAIN PEN.



One of the most peculiar and mystifying pens on the market. It requires no ink. All you have to do is to dip it in water, and it will write for an indefinite period. The secret can only be learned by procuring one, and you can make it a source of both pleasure and amusement by claiming to your friends what it can do and then demonstrating the fact. Moreover, it is a good pen, fit for practical use, and will never leak ink into your pocket, as a defective fountain pen might do.

Price, 10c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

### THE X-RAY REVOLVER



With one of these guns you can defy the Sullivan Law with impunity. It is used to scare, and not to shoot. It is impossible to detect the fact that it is not a genuine revolver. Can be used as a paper-weight, an ornament, or in other ways. Price, by mail, 45 cents each, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

### JUMPING TELESCOPE.



This is an oblong tube in exact imitation of a telescope. By looking through it, reveals one highly magnified picture of a dancer or other subject. It contains on the side a button, which the victim is told to press for a change of picture. Instead of another picture appearing, the entire inside part shoots out, as shown in illustration. It is entirely harmless, but gives the victim a genuine scare.

Price, 15c. each; 2 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

### WINDOW SMASHERS.



The greatest sensation, just from Paris. A most wonderful effect of a smashing, breaking, falling pane or glass. It will electrify everybody. When you come home, slam the door shut and at the same time throw the discs to the floor. Every pane of glass in the house will at once seem to have been shattered. Price, by mail, postpaid, 35c., a set of six plates.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

### MUSICAL SEAT



The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly

shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid

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The real western article, carried by the cowboys. It is made of fine leather, with a highly nickeled buckle. The holster contains a metal gun, of the same pattern as those used by all the most famous scouts. Any boy wearing one of these fobs will attract attention. It will give him an air of western romance. The prettiest and most serviceable watch fob ever made. Send for one to-day. Price 20 cents each by mail postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN,  
419 W. 56th St., N. Y.





### STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.

The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price by mail, postpaid 10c.; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO.,  
29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

### THE INK BLOT JOKER.



**Fool Your Friends.**—The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

### CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

### COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.



A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As each figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions. With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and ink pad, only 10c., 3 sets for 25c., one dozen 90c., by mail postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



### GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

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### CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK



With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

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### THE MAGIC DAGGER.



A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand and suddenly state that you think you have lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.  
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### DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.



This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid.

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**ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.**—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black walnut, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring.

As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed. Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.

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A great Sensational Trick of the Day! With the Fire Eater in his possession any person can become a perfect salamander, apparently breathing fire and ejecting thousands of brilliant sparks from his mouth, to the horror and consternation of all beholders. Harmless fun for all times, seasons and places. If you wish to produce a decided sensation in your neighborhood don't fail to procure one. We send the Fire Eater with all the materials, in a handsome box, the cover of which is highly ornamented with illustrations in various colors. Price of all complete only 15c., or 4 boxes for 50c., mailed postpaid; one dozen by express \$1.20.

N. B.—Full printed instructions for performing the trick accompany each box, which also contains sufficient material for giving several exhibitions.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

### PIGGY IN A COFFIN.



This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grunt at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

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